Fall 1991 Council Meeting
Minutes and Discussion Papers

This issue of Administrative Notes contains the abbreviated minutes of the fall 1991 meeting of the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer, together with the discussion papers distributed at the meeting. The meeting, held October 22 and 23 at the Government Printing Office in Washington, DC, was the first in which Council, in a new, enhanced role, deliberated on issues presented to it by the Public Printer. The issues focused on the electronic dissemination of Federal information through the Federal Depository Library Program.

Depository Library Council
Fall 1991 Meeting

Abbreviated Minutes

October 22-23, 1991
Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, October 22, 1991

Depository Library Council Members present:

Janet Fisher, Chair	Bob Oakley
Gary Cornwell, Vice Chair	John Weiner
Sioux Plummer, Secretary	Sen. Richard Varn
Christine Kitchens	Beth Duston
BJ Swartz	Kay Schlueter
Teresa Marquez	Miriam Drake (arr. 10:40 a.m)
Susan Tulis	
Mark Vonderhaar	Absent: Sandy Morton

GPO Staff present:

Robert Houk, U.S. Public Printer
Wayne Kelley, Superintendent of Documents
Rick Barnett, Chief of Staff
Judy Russell, Office of Information Dissemination Policy
Jane Bartlett, Information Technology Program
Bonnie Trivizas, Library Programs Service
Tony Zagami, General Counsel

Chair Fisher called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m., greeted Council members, staff and observers.

Mr. Houk welcomed new and old members; introduced new members; welcomed observers. Encouraged policy discussions now that Council is in "revitalized form." He wants development of policy options; advice on costs and benefits; wants arsenal of choices. Council is now in forum that will allow it to be free to explore, linger, concentrate. He's confident ideas will germinate and discussions will be spirited. Consensus not needed, but won't be discouraged. Reiterated his expectations as explained in his June 1991 letter to Council members.

Wayne Kelly offered his greetings and thanked Mr. Houk for leading GPO toward electronics and on-line media, saying that he believes the Library Program will thus become strengthened.

Chair Fisher noted that good cross-section of library community was in attendance as observers. Library associations, librarians, JCP, publishing industry all seem to be represented. A list of attendees will be distributed later.

Council members introduced themselves.

Gary Cornwell explained discussion papers and their purpose. Called them "position papers" but viewed as "discussion papers". They do not represent group work, but 10 questions done by 10 individuals of Council. They are not a Council consensus but are simply to prompt Council discussion.

Discussion about electronic media:

Longevity of electronic media is of concern; new data indicates CD ROMs affected by moisture and last only 3 to 5 years.

Vonderhaar & Oakley:
> Three main issues of concern:
> - database retention is preservation related
> - study last spring (NARA?) allegedly says CD ROM will last only 3-5 years, although some believe 10-20 years.
> - standards for information storage

Kitchens: Clarification--No NARA study, but they'd like to do one. Archivists are talking, but no study yet.

Fisher: Standards; what kind of standards are agencies following and what is being considered?

Russell: ISO 9660--Standard logical format for creating data. Standards being developed by various industries--Gov't will follow. (Will there be standards for retrieval software that libraries can count on?) Who controls? No centralized control; publishing decision made by agency that has responsibility for the information--how they choose to disseminate it.

Weiner: Council should deal with need for user and librarian input to publishing community. Publishers will appreciate feedback.

Oakley: Task Force? Need mechanism. What should Council do to make that happen?

Russell: SIGCAT User group exists.
GPO technical people will look at parallel standards activity that's going on. Concept is to create some level of standard data so various software are interchangeable without having same interface.

Mike Ruvinfeld, Chair of SIGCAT Special Interest Group on Standards, at NIST, (301) 975-3064. A brief comment in describing his group says, "The ISO 9660 standard is now universal through the federal government and much of the private sector. There are several initiatives underway to extend this standard to better serve the UNIX and POSIX communities. There are also several initiatives addressing the interoperability of CD ROMS across computing platforms. SIGSTAND (that's the name of the little group) tracks all of these standards activities and provides SIGCAT members with updates as well as indepth information on developments in the CD ROM standards arena."

Kelley: GPO will be intermediary to pass information to depository users. Will set up ways to get information and to pass it on. One way may be to take on responsibility to communicate this type of information.

Vonderhaar:
Council on record one year ago as having advocated something that's very closely related to standards and in effect complements them and that is the notion of the underlying data being available on a continuing basis in a form that's readable and not likely to be made obsolete; that's separable from the software with which it is currently distributed. There are significant standards in the area of magnetic tape although it's not a medium for personal use very much. It has some interesting parallels and perhaps some models. It at least has a limited number of formats that most people who use it regularly can arrange to read. It has something in the area of mark which is very important

to the depository library community, the institutions that depositories are typically found, it is a record format which is probably the only one that is widely understood and interchangeable. The tape is not archival, per se, is easily duplicated and can be converted to other forms.

Cornwell: Many articles about characteristics of retrieval software. Suggest making list.

Russell: GPO would help share list--"actively promulgate" it.

Weiner: "Marketing component" serves both standardization and marketing purposes.

Duston: Is there a present mechanism (in GPO) whereby information is exchanged (about preservation, standards, etc.)?

Russell: GPO participates in various forums.

Weiner: Could be done through SIGCAT.

Kelley: New GPO mechanism: GPO will be looking at ways to communicate with folks more about electronic media through sales department.

Duston: How people use information is what GPO could bring to table.

Plummer: What does Beth visualize that Council/GPO could do?

Duston: FAX technology is easy, speedy. Trying to think of all ways that are easy for public to access information. Problem with some on-line things; too complicated for some users.

Cornwell: Fax good idea for short documents. On line products serve other roles.

Duston: Can't fax a lot of paper, but advantages exist for shorter documents, such as local phone call and sender uses own paper. Could be ordering component, as well as information component.

Varn: Question is who can do work? If not the user, someone else can (make a map and fax it to me). What's motivating people to do it? Figure that out then target strategy. Then standards follow. Identify.

Oakley: Slight shift in discussion: Are there standards for "image based" data transfer? Get in on ground floor and communicate with publishing community.

Russell: There are a number of relatively widely accepted standards for images. We are working on a program with an agency who is interested in taking a PostScript file and being able to deliver those to end users so they can print out. Not just the right information but replicas of the right information exactly. They are interested in delivering up forms so the size, type, format, etc. is critical that what you get is an exact replica. Want to collect

information in standardized format. PostScript is becoming a dominant format.

Oakley: Different typestyles and sizes can change the meaning, in a quick decision, the way it is read. It is not just a reading que. Graphics are lost in conveying ASCII files. These are important reasons for moving toward an image based system.

BREAK 10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Meeting resumed at 10:19 a.m.

Discussion Papers

Paper 1a; developed by Janet Fisher
Are there some specific documents in databases that can be identified as the first or highest priority for electronic dissemination? If so, what are they and what criteria can be used to identify this material?

Tulis: Title 44, which directs GPO to make federal publications available to the public.

Russell: GPO is trying to be more proactive in identifying materials that can go into program.

Schlueter: Are you (GPO) actively going out to agencies and suggesting to them, even if there isn't an online source available in the agency, or are you only going out if they already have an online source that we would like to get into?

Russell: At the moment we have not been actively seeking online systems at all. Actively communicating with others. With new program will be going out more to agencies before they get to the point of publishing trying to do more of that kind of outreach. Looking for not absolutes as much as types of information, media, other criteria that GPO should be considering.

Tulis: Doesn't think can come to consensus about list of priorities.
Worried that what would be low on priority list would never appear in system at all.

Russell: Doesn't think that will happen.

Tulis: Many things in program on paper that are still missing. Would like same initiative about missing paper documents as interest in electronic formats.

Cornwell: Vendors are going to market a list of fugitive documents. Must be a priority.

Oakley: Don't think we can get very far down a priority list without hitting serendipity, but want to take stab at rational way to begin process; core list of publications is already there; neutral and already agreed upon.

Russell: Are we to spend energies to get electronic versions of core material to replace or spend energy to get things in that otherwise don't get into program at all? Broad mandate but finite resources. Is the priority to broaden coverage or on other media or material that is already in the program?

Oakley: If given constraints that would eliminate paper, then he takes his list off the table. We have to find other ways to start (the process).

Duston: Shares her personal experience about documents that sit on shelf and never get published in final form; "an outrage"; research having to be redone that has already been funded to be in final report form. Expects such works be in federal documents system. Opportunity here to establish mechanism to get information in pot before it even gets disseminated. She's very concerned about this issue.

Cornwell: Gets back to role of Council. What kind of advice does GPO want? Look at budget? Look at current situation or long term future? Does GPO want things like priority lists or discussion about future?

Kelley: Don't need list. Want "best thinking." Budget 30% less buying power than 1983! Want to maintain and to do what we can about attacking areas where there are things that should be in the library program in print and microfiche that aren't there. We need to start in electronics. What are we going to do for whom, and why, and how do we get started (with this budget constraint)?

Windo Bill states that GPO become window for online data bases to library. One paragraph in bill says: "GPO shall include such databases as are reasonable appropriate based upon input from database users, libraries, and federal agencies." Looking for best thinking of Council, but not a list.

Varn: What do you have to face now versus what should you do. That's a different answer. Criteria:

> Update cost and time.
> Storage cost versus use.
> Need to be searchable.
> Could or would other users tap into on their own if you provide the gateway?

Are those the kind of criteria you're looking for?

Kelley: Yes. Those are good criteria you mentioned.

(10:40 a.m. Miriam Drake arrives.)

Drake: Offers comments re: "how is information used?" That is another set of criteria. Suggests that timeliness, i.e. directories, whether published on CD ROM or paper, out of date when they hit the street.

Vonderhaar: Pilot project evaluations are still desired. Are they floundering?

Kelley: Will bring final evaluations and distribute them.

Swartz: Need statistical information that can be manipulated. Wants statistical abstract in electronic format, but doesn't want to lose printed product either. Both are valuable for different purposes. Discussion of big differences between uses of information.

Drake: OK for some paper and microfiche to go away--such as directories that change. Trade off is cost of space vs. cost of storing paper--archiving is important. Doesn't want (her library) to become a paper warehouse.

Schlueter: Leads to restructuring on DLP service. How to address differences in sizes and resources in libraries--will regionals take care of small libraries who can no longer get paper or have money and space?

Marquez: Grant program on lottery basis for small libraries. Some small libraries can barely afford phone lines, let alone consider fax machines. Concerned with ways to help small libraries.

Fisher: Grant money bought fax for smaller libraries.

Cornwell: Good tangent to discuss restructuring--probably time to sponsor a national conference to restructure GPO now that electronic environment exists. Include GPO, Council, IAA, JCP, depository library community, etc.
Could we discuss Wednesday--it's been discussed for years.

Oakley: How about including this on Spring User's Conference meeting agenda? Electronics has created a new environment and needs to be discussed. One thing that came up recently was distributing information by broadcast method rather than online.

Diston: Who is the users group? How do people want the information? Identify who's using what.

Cornwell: First meeting coming up under new Council structure. Users are depository librarians.

Drake: John Doe has greater choices--will need libraries less. May need to take some risks to find all the choices and what works.

Marquez: Many libraries are not able to join technology march. Need to keep information available for "poor" users--small rural libraries, etc.

Varn: What is juice in this system? Public access at state, local, federal governments. Volume of information traffic will justify high quality terminals even in rural locations. Can be justified on the volume of transactions. Need to coordinate with other sources of power and money; other revenue streams and service points of delivery.

Swartz: State data center networks -- need to talk to them and coordinate use of existing services and systems. Each state varies in facilities and policies, but do have networks with potential uses for depository system.

Plummer: There's advantage in talking to data centers--win/win situation on both sides. Most data centers are in need to know better what users want, what public access issues there are, and how to develop appropriate policies. Depositories and data centers can learn from and help each other.

Fisher: In Arizona, businesses have come to the University/State to help. Libraries are included. Most effective link is depositories getting together and then talking to data centers, not vice versa.

Discussion on what GPO really needs here.

Marquez: Wants to be sure to include television in discussions as a technological resource to depository libraries.

Plummer: Let's try to focus on some specific issues now and help each other accomplish a few things today. We seem to have lots of ideas to bring together.

Varn: I agree.

(Much discussion followed, with most members participating. Discussion focused on how to best offer information/advice to GPO; who to talk to, what existing resources to tap, where to focus, what models to follow, etc.)

Plummer: Do we want to try to answer (paper 1A) or just continue to talk/brainstorm about it? Perhaps we should ask GPO: do you want us to come up with lists and categories or continue with more than what was in Janet's paper (1A)?

Kelley: A question he asks is: will depository libraries be part of the electronic future, and if so, how? He still wants "thinking" of Council, not specific lists of criteria.

Schlueter: Appropriate for GPO to give out information as to electronic data bases, forums, e-mail, bulletin boards, etc., that are available and how to access them. It's a very valid thing for LPS to do; especially for smaller libraries.

Kelley: GPO may be under pressure to question some present values.

Tulis: Would be more comfortable if we could address restructuring first.

Kelley: Has similar feeling. If we asked depository libraries what would happen to them then we could determine better how to restructure GPO/LPS.

Drake: If we're in planning mode, what's horizon?

Kelley: Five years.

Cornwell: Back to understanding use of information before determining type of media.

Drake: What is cost of carrying inventory? Reason: down the road, but is really here now, is the remote printing potential. Costs will change--ongoing printing is now done locally, and this needs to be thrown into the equation.

Kelley: Of course costs will be affected.

Fisher: Watch out--state's ability to accept costs that are shifted to states, such as if printing done in libraries. Example: the Congressional Record.

Oakley: Timeliness is also an important factor, then cost to user.

Drake: (At her library) they download and print Commerce Business Daily (broadcast concept). Faculty can then retrieve it daily from their own terminals. More timely, and reduces costs. Also, don't keep them for more than about 3 months to avoid storage costs.

Kelley: We are losing subscribers. Who are you buying it from?

Drake: Private vendor because service was going to be better.

Vonderhaar:
            What is user distribution profile?

Oakley: GPO needs to see how libraries are going to outside sources--and seize opportunity to do what others are doing. GPO challenge.

Kelley: Agrees--that's our challenge.

Varn: Re: #1 How to identify/prioritize factors/concerns discussed

     1. immediacy, timeliness
     2. archival needs
     3. update or looseleaf costs
     4. storage costs
     5. needs to searched; manipulated
     6. can other users tap in on their own
     7. how data used--what's wanted?
     8. desire for real paper record
     9. user support
    10. cost
    11. completeness of public record and access to it

Fisher: Good way to characterize discussion.

(All members agreed these are the concerns and attributes expressed in discussions so far. Then there was more discussion of what to do next.)

Oakley: Not sure we've been explicit enough about relevancy of private sector products--need to discuss more?

Russell: Should GPO really duplicate/redistribute things that already exist in private sector if limited resources?

Oakley: Costs to library and cost to end-user <u>are factors</u>.

Vonderhaar:
      Is it fair to burden other libraries when law libs get access through **LEXIS**, etc.?

Drake: Difference between generic and value added product. Generics equally important because value added is for specific markets. Don't forget **richness** of use out there.

Cornwell: Does GPO system have gateway to put other Bulletin Boards on GPO Bulletin Board for libraries to access? Why doesn't GPO get access to **those** Bulletin Boards that aren't free?

(Discussion here regarding notion of free access to information.)

Oakley: Remember to distinquish between what's really free and those bulletin boards that aren't free.

Swartz: What are Cleveland FreeNET costs?

Oakley: Cost of FreeNET is underwritten by Case Western--but how is it funded? Is it good public policy to rely on Bulletin Board that could lose funding? Also talk to North Carolina, they are in trouble; bulletin board system funding is threatened.

Swartz: Suggests just talking to Cleveland FreeNET to help assess costs.

Kelley: Nothing is really free. There is perhaps NO CHARGE, but someone pays for it.

Fisher: Explains distribution of information about following:

1) Copy of Congressional Record, Extension of Remarks, Oct. 3, 1991, re: standards. 2) Owens bill, i.e. improvement of information access Act.

BREAK FOR LUNCH; APPROX. 12:00 NOON

October 22, 1:45 p.m. Afternoon session

Interest in FreeNet--Judy Russell will hand out information later.

Fisher: Regarding agenda format for afternoon: suggests continuing with discussion and believes papers 3 & 4 will be covered during it. Asks Plummer to assist with facilitating discussion and Tulis with wall charts that were developed yesterday.

Key Issues for afternoon discussion:

1) Title 44--add electronic language
   (Roberts Bill)
   1895 law; modified in 1962, needs updating.
   Most members agreed ambiguous language in existing law is reason update and clarification is needed.

2) GPO Bulletin Board--two uses: Hermes and E-Mail
   1) Market it more
   2) Not as timely as commercial service
   3) Cumbersome; sometimes can't download from it.
   4) Hard to get on for some users; not very user friendly.
   5) Different "sigs"; is there now a mechanism so everyone can see everything?

Trivizas: Are these complaints being adequately conveyed to GPO operations, (System Operator)? Call new phone number (in AD Notes) to contact system operator with specific problems.

Plummer: Let's try not to get mired down in operational issues, but move over more to those issues that require policy development.

Oakley: Before we abandon GPO Bulletin Board topic, one more thing about Hermes and how to make it more functional. Other bulletin boards he signs on to provide him list of most recent uploads, which is very useful.

Kelley: One thing Council members could do is give GPO a list of good and reliable bulletin boards they are familiar with.

3) See paper 2a, page 8.
Don't put up constraints or obstacles, such as rules that prevent some libraries from making choices. Local discussion preferred? Is a two-tiered service system for depositories a good idea, for example?

4) What is best way to get electronic information to those libraries who want it? How should it be allocated?

5) GPO should competitively bid for best package of telecom lines for providing low cost online services.

(Much discussion here by most members on allocation issues.)

Oakley: Problem is how to allocate with limited money. First come, first served with time out period, and based on certain number of ports available on bulletin board system. Seems only fair and rational way. One large library with Internet in each state or a region could be the mother electronic library--leverage out of GPO--then pass on to other smaller libraries.

Cornwell: One other possibility is for GPO to make greater use of InterNET to one major library in each region.

Marquez: What is NREN going to do? Presently in conference committee. How can GPO capitalize on this?

Russell: GPO watching it closely. Not clear yet how will be advantageous to GPO.

Swartz: Thinks that throughout discussions so far have covered a lot of what is contained in papers 3a/3b.

Cornwell: Have and have not issue: restructuring should take care of that.

Swartz: Restructuring may not be limited to just libraries; don't forget to include state data centers as potential depository institutions.

Fisher: Must be commitment to public access by institutions who receive electronic formats for regional use. Besides technical guidelines, there needs to be staff training minimums too.

Kitchens: Various institutions have various definitions of public access.

Swartz: Staff development and training should be responsibility of libraries; all responsibilities are not just on GPO.

3:35 p.m., AFTER BREAK

Houk: Offers his comments/feedback/impressions on how Council is performing so far under its new structure in this meeting. Pleased with Council's deliberations so far; appreciates candor and could feel our struggle with some of the issues. He kept quiet in order not to be intrusive so Council could proceed with exploring issues. Asks that Council continue as we are until end of today and tomorrow. He appreciates observers' support and restraint.

Kelley: He too is pleased and encourages Council to proceed. This group grope is ok- -pertinent--takes time. Meeting needs to be thought out and felt; not choreographed. Wants more information on two things:

1) Electronics will move GPO into change--what can GPO do to address this? (online databases, CD ROM, BB)
-immediate changes; what is GPO going to do, and,
-how to organize to do it

2) How to project today's values into a digital future? Is equity possible? How to preserve values with inequities in order to work toward more equity? Best way to spend money.

GPO must become partner with other providers? Equity to all or testing and learning. If "pilot project" is created, it should become beta sites and offered to all at some point after beta testing.

Kitchens: Wants to be assured that pilot projects will be passed on once tested by smaller group.

Drake: Testing and learning to debug on small scale is advisable; then go to large beta group. Perhaps test over InterNet. Select from people who have access to Internet.

Fisher/Trivizas:
Discussion of length of time for previous tests.

Varn: Offer test to those who can and want to participate. Include in the beta test group some of those (smaller) libraries who aren't totally prepared to deal with electronic systems.

Kelley: Feedback from tests very important. What should GPO learn from Bulletin Board?

Cornwell: Prepare test group that new system may have problems with it; give list of questions during test.

Drake: People who participate have to have clear, explicit picture of what they are testing--questions need answering.

Swartz: Also may want to consider test variables; length, type of testing.

Russell: Testing database or gateway? Bulletin Board to Bulletin Board gateway would be simplistic; others can get more complex.

Kelley: To get back to another question, everybody feels that electronics may transform the structure of the library program--how might we go about pursuing that? Would it be useful to know more results from some of these tests when a group came together it is suggested they would have some evidence to deal with?

Plummer: Clarification re: the term restructure. Are we talking about changing how the libraries receive information from the GPO, or are we talking about reorganizing the Library Programs Service?

Cornwell: Probably means both.

Varn: Going back to some previous discussion, if you knew all of your customers out there, and knew what people would ask for if they knew it was there,
1) through better marketing,
2) Customer will know what wants.
3) Then would know what purpose serving and what documents are needed by what media--will drive technical decisions.
4) Then the structure can be established.

Kelley: Is Patent system a good model?

Kitchens: Patent system is good, user-friendly, low cost. Training was provided on use of on-line system.

Oakley: Library usage not going down; it's that usage patterns are changing due to multiple paths to getting information. Librarians role is becoming much more complex; becoming information brokers.

Kelley: A lot of commercial search companies exist.

End of above discussion.

Fisher: Introductions of new Joint Committee on Printing (JCP) staff for Chairman
Charlie Rose, Congressman from North Carolina
-Gail Davis--Acting Staff Director
-John Chambers-Deputy Staff Director
-John Merritt starting Nov. 1 as new staff director; Davis will then become
assistant staff director.

Chambers says GPO/Council will have a somewhat different access to new chair Rose.

4:20 p.m.
OBSERVER COMMENTS

Fisher: Please try to hold comments to maximum of five minutes.

Bernadine Hoduski (JCP staff)
HR 2772 "WINDO" Bill by Rose
-even appropriation committee agrees CD ROM is here to stay.
-JCP define policies
-GPO implement policies
-WINDO Bill should help do this
-Does address both depository libraries access and the general public

Other information on legislation:
HB 3459 by Congressman Major Owens, who is a librarian. He created a few
basic criteria that fits in with Mr. Rose's philosophy. This new bill is good
starting point. Doesn't conflict with GPO window bill.

Roberts Bill--must ask Congressman Roberts for copies of that bill. Is
another vehicle to be looked at.

Oakley to Hoduski:
Is additional money for GPO with WINDO bill?

Hoduski: No--but if passes, GPO will have to tell Congress money needed to
implement. JCP believes GPO does have money in its revolving fund; it's a
matter of how they are going to spend it. No cost estimates for this bill yet.
When John Merritt comes on (as JCP head), he will work with GPO on cost
scenarios and common understandings. Also have to consider proceeds from
sales program.

Varn to Hoduski:
Explain "self-subscription"; i.e. anyone can buy.

Hoduski: GPO could handle such accounts. It would be one focal point to come in and
have a total list of all databases available. Would be a coordinated way for
the agencies to use GPO as their "jobber," just like libraries use jobbers now
for commercial publishers.

Kathleen Eisenbeis, Wayne State University

Has experience with user studies, says the problems with any user study is the scale. Narrow focus may or may not get good results. In her opinion, too much data to study, not enough sophisticated methods available. Recommends GPO not even attempt study, unless can get a doctoral student to do 5-6 year study.
Otherwise too expensive, big and diverse for GPO to get valid data.

Julie Wallace, University of Minnesota

Miscellaneous comments

1) Who is end-user issue: different type of end user on online product than one sitting at CD ROM station.

2) Still getting floppy disk--still need guidelines on how to use them.

3) Depository libraries still need to help market depository service.

4) Microfiche back-log deters from Depository Library credibility--and trying to push them as best source of government information. Makes it difficult to be the best source of government information. Example: still don't have information on Gulf War and that was 6 months ago.

5) SEND data--good commercial database as are those at Library of Congress.

Steve Hayes, Notre Dame

- New electronic products could be sent to beta sites to determine best ways to use; debug problems. Then send to all users with instructions.
- Those who can afford direct contractor will do so, otherwise will go to intermediary (library).
- "Marketing technique" shifts most popular products to top of list--he hopes this won't happen.

Ridley Kessler, U of No. Carolina

- People use all sources--paper still used along with electronic media; use of both has increased.
- librarians have become brokers; we use old and new tools.
- people need some kind of resource to select services.

Vigdor Shriebman, Co-editor of "Electronic Public Information", a new newsletter to be published soon.

- Changing of structure--difficult to change self
- System planners should be consulted since this is a big task that includes changing old established value system. An "oceanic task".
  Get planners and systems analysts to help with such a huge project.
- Information revolution puts GPO in position of trying to catch up with technology.
- must deal with this or people involved may become irrelevant to the process.
- GPO needs workshop to work out how to restructure to find out if it's even feasible.

Linda Kennedy/UC Davis

- Appreciated opportunity to offer Council comments prior to meeting; encourages librarians to take greater responsibility for getting comments to Council in the future.
- Offer greater access to GPO Bulletin Board
- Get GPO on GOVDOC-L
- Wants to hear from GPO first rather than others/users on GOVDOC-L
- If users can't handle access now, they most likely will catch up, so don't assume they won't be able to be part of the system at some point.

The meeting was recessed by Chair Fisher at 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 23, 1991

The meeting was called back to order by Chair Fisher at 8:55 a.m.
All Council members present, except Beth Duston. Same staff as previous day also in attendance. Observers present.

Announcements:
Admin Notes will publish all papers discussed at this meeting as well as the minutes as prepared by Secretary Sioux Plummer.

New Issues:

1. FEDERAL MARITIME BILL

Oakley: Precedent of "taxing information" a concern. Recommends that sense of council be reflected in minutes that does not support the language in the bill which imposes tax on government information database rather than one on boats to generate revenue. Council advises GPO not to support this language--bad precedent. No problem repealing boat tax, but not ok to start taxing information. Both library organizations and information industry oppose this bill.

Vonderhaar:
        Explained further and concurred. Poor policy precedent.

Varn: Appreciates political sensitivity--but believes important to support GPO's survival by opposing this language. Such a policy could substantially harm the depository system. Quotes Major Owens bill; sums up his feelings on this issue.

Weiner: Oakley, Morton, Varn will draft resolution and propose to Council later in meeting

2. WINDO BILL

Oakley: Has no funding attached to it. Wants to urge Public Printer that sufficient resources for it and that Council supports concept of WINDO bill, but will need money to implement it. Is this another issue requiring sense of Council.

Cornwell: Agrees, but not just WINDO--but any similar legislation.

Morton: Uncomfortable with leaving today without some more specific statement to be sure concerns are on record in more ways than minutes.
"Sense of Council" method seems like a good idea.

Fisher: Suggests that Chair send letter to Houk following meeting listing major primary concerns.

Morton: Concurs that pulling out major issues would be helpful.

Drake: Suggest minutes reflect consensus of issues. Resolutions not necessary--cover letter ok--list major points.

Kelley: Consensus fine; but diversity and individual points of view are as valuable to Houk so be sure to reflect all points.

Morton: Even resolution or similar process will be reflected in record and it's those discussions that will show sense of Council.

Cornwell: Wants resolution when there is strong sense of Council on a special subject.

Weiner: Suggests some process should take place to emphasize special concerns--"sense of Council" is preferred term to emphasize in record.

This discussion ended with group consensus that using "sense of Council" method was satisfactory way to convey important issues to Public Printer.

(Discussion then took place about Windo bill. Details could not be heard well on tape.)

Plummer: Reads proposed language to reflect sense of Council regarding Windo bill: It is the sense of Council that the Depository Library Council supports the concept of the Windo Bill and similar proposals to make electronic government information available to the nation; however, we are concerned that the current proposals provide no resources that permit the Government Printing Office to develop the concept and, we urge the Public Printer to seek additional resources for the development and implementation of the concept.

Drake: We are in transition period and transition needs to be financed--it may go on for some time--dual world--basic infrastructure changes come slowly. Offers this consideration for Secretary to work into proposed language.

Plummer: Assures members that 3 different tapes are running in addition to her taking notes. Feels confident that sense of Council will get adequately reflected in final form of minutes.

Zagami: Re: WINDO Bill funding: two stages in legislative process--WINDO is only an authorization bill. Then appropriations bill will reflect work of appropriations committee based on cost estimates not yet figured. Need authorization first. Not an entitlement program--important to understand processes. Need to get authority and mandate before appropriations work begins. Also--this is not funded from revolving fund like private businesses.

Oakley: Suggests adding to proposed language: "when appropriate".

All members agree with Oakley's suggestion and Secretary complies.

Fisher: One other issue was possibility of another group, such as user group or ombudsman for GPO operational issues, so depository librarians get feedback about their operational concerns.

Cornwell: Since restructuring of Depository Library Council, the library community concerned that they still have voice on operational issues. Some ideas include:
-subcommittee of this council
-calls to one person of authority at GPO
-responses in Admin Notes, or Bulletin Board or GOVDOC-L

Drake: Concept of consumer relations person very good idea, but Council should not be involved. Leave it to GPO to manage a person who is responsible for this--plenty of avenues for this--give it a try, since it hasn't been tried before. This is much better than forming another advisory group!

Schlueter: Agrees that staff person is appropriate; more continuity.

Fisher: Endorses Cornwell's idea for a column in Admin Notes will reach all 1,400 librarians--good way to answer problems.

Morton: Good--appropriate outreach--also get GPO staff people at major library organizations meetings--would be good consumer relations approach.

Drake: Transition, as mentioned earlier, also includes changes in management, jobs, and methods as well as equipment/processes/ money etc.
Small steps should be encouraged; changes take time.

3. INCREASE GPO COMMUNICATIONS

Cornwell: Budgets are being cut which impacts long distance telephone budgets too. Internet for some is an additional means to communicate, it is growing rapidly--easy way to communicate--urges GPO to get on the Internet.

Cornwell: Federal Depository Bulletin Board--need to improve it--add other BBs to it. Shipping lists on it would be great--still problems getting in--front end improvements needed.

Oakley: Fits in with charge from Houk and Kelley re: both long term and short term visions. This is a good short-term project for success.

4. RETRIEVAL SOFTWARE
Desirable characteristics of it--a checklist would be helpful.

Weiner: Will help disseminate such a list.

Cornwell: Checking to see if GODORT already preparing a list. Will provide to Judy Russell (GPO) as well as depository librarians. Cornwell and Tulis get list to Weiner.

Marquez: What's purpose--who gets list?

Tulis: GODORT discussed preparing one page sheet to give to agencies--but doesn't know status yet.

5. BUDGET
Fisher: Question to GPO: when and how will budget data be shared with Council? Need it to put in better context some of GPOs money constraints.

Morton: FY 93 information will be useful to those who stay in touch in DC when Houk testifies on the hill. Copies of his previous testimony has been helpful. Will be particularly helpful during budget hearings.

Cornwell: Library of Congress has done estimates as to what would happen to them if 5% budget cut. Similar information would be useful--i.e., ramifications of cuts.

Marquez: Stakeholders will better support Public Printer in information distribution at appropriate time.

Tulis: Has worked in past, but we can't write Congressmen, etc. if no accurate and timely data.

Fisher: Next meeting date.
        May 13 suggested--How many days?
        Discussion on this moved to later in today's agenda.

6. OBSERVER COMMENTS

Ridley Kessler, University of North Carolina

- Emphasizes that a lot of people not getting into GPO Bulletin Board.
- Thanks Tony Zagami for explanation of budget and WINDO bill. Supports Council studying budget and urges GPO to ask for more funds even though resources are limited.

Houk: Suggests at this point, Vince Arendes, Chief Financial Officer, speak about revolving fund.

Arendes: Revolving Fund cash balance $123 million at end of August. This sounds like a lot but actually pays for upfront costs to do business. $80 million is GPO's monthly operating cost. Fiduciary funds are $55 million.
        Fiduciary funds (passthrough funds that have restrictions) reduce revolving fund to $70 million. Also, subtract $16 million for capital improvements. Law requires that sales program extra receipts go back to Treasury, which is approx. $3 million. Leaves about $36 million to run operation which is less than 1/2 of monthly operating costs.

        Lots to consider--cash number does not reflect true constraints. Holding head above water OK but no excess funds. Understand appropriation process and that growth restricted--GPO not so hesitant to ask for money; it's that committees don't have much money to offer. Also, changes to budgets occur on short notice and it's not always possible to tell everyone in timely manner about those changes when they occur.

Bernadine Hoduski, JCP

        WINDO bill partially a sales bill. Sales prices reflect equipment costs needed in revolving fund. Everything funded out of revolving fund. GPO has to ask for money for revolving fund.

Linda Kennedy, UC Davis and Chair, GODORT

- Will check on status of retrieval software with GODORT committee. GODORT spring meeting will include time for GPO staff to get operational concerns from librarians. Likes idea of consumer relations person and broadcasting responses. Still wants Council to look at major operational concerns which become policy issues.

Steve Hays, U. Notre Dame

-   Wants strategy for how to advise Public Printer, but also comes back to library community. Need to tell community what advice has been provided by Council in some formal way. Important that minutes of these meetings clearly reflect "advice" that is given.

-   Also wants GPO to get on Internet or GOVDOC-L as quickly as possible, and monitor discussions that are now going on, including wrong information, without GPO's participation.

Bill Olbrich, Washington University

-   Attended since 1974--seen many changes--glad to see others brought to Council with fresh ideas--but, want more in-depth orientation of new members--will bring them up to speed faster. They should be required to visit depository libraries in their regions as part of their orientation.

-   Video suggested as training film for new librarians as well as Council members. Very cheap way to get information to these people.

-   RE: Internet--he reports to small colleges as do other big libraries--Internet makes information exchange possible.

Julie Wallace, U of Minnesota

-   Internet also allows her to communicate with 35 other institutions. If GPO on, would encourage other institutions to get on too.

-   GPO Bulletin Board--not easy to get on and takes too much time to use--costly long distance calls, in part due to bulletin board not being user-friendly.

10:25 a.m. Break

10:40 a.m. Reconvene

Fisher: Announcements

1.   Introductions:

Shirley Woodrow--Sr. Staff to JCP. She primarily works for Senators Stevens and Hatfield

Walter Tipett--Professional Staff to JCP Chairman Rose.

2.   Notes that Senator Richard Varn is featured in October 23, 1991 Chronical for Higher Education regarding state owned telecommunications system.

Houk: Hates to see meeting come to close; has been interesting and has reinforced his expectations. Pleased with progress of this meeting.
            GPO will respond to outcome of this meeting with dispatch.

Kelley: Meeting has been important to him and LPS staff. Will review quickly--will react soon. We are looking forward to following up on some of these issues and working with you.

Fisher: Suggestions for next meeting include restructuring, since it was mentioned several times.

Cornwell: There was lively conversation yesterday after formal meeting--lots of ideas that we feel should be discussed with GPO and perhaps in discussion papers as well.

Morton: Thanks to Nancy Guiden re: providing copy of Congressman Roberts bill.

Vonderhaar:
            Asked Kelley to confirm that we will get copy of Strategic Plan for comments, prior to the next Council meeting.

Houk: GPO has a unique and extraordinary planning process.
            Two phase:
            -Drafting of plan
            -Implementation

            Will share with Council when released outside the agency.

Fisher: Asked Plummer to read Sense of Council Statement re: Federal Maritime Bill, as follows:
            It is the sense of Council that the Depository Library Council is concerned about the proposal to tax the use and reuse of government information as embodied in HR 534, a bill which in part proposes to charge royalties for the use of the tariff database maintained by the Federal Maritime Commission. The Council believes Representative Major Owens expressed our concerns well when he said recently that, "The desire of some government agencies to find new and creative gimmicks to raise additional revenues is understandable in these budget conscious times, but nickel and diming taxpayers for government information they have already bought and paid for is not the way." (From the October 3, 1991 Congressional Record).

All members of Council agreed with statement as read.

Fisher: Discussed upcoming date of spring meeting, and how to deal with questions and issues. Suggests that several people work individually on one question to

get diversity of thought, if papers are again assigned to Council.

Vonderhaar:
Sounds like this assumes we will again be assigned paper writing tasks. Not clear this time--he's not in favor of paper writing tasks prior to each meeting.

Morton:
Next meeting--need to include time for overview with staff. Suggests two days good with 1/2 day of updating with staff. Likes opp. to meet with council informally first. Also--observers perhaps need name tags so they and Council can mingle and meet with one another.

Cornwell:
During the transition, prior to this meeting, a few things fell through reorganization of this meeting. Need primary contact at GPO and more timely receipt of documents, travel orders, etc., prior to meeting. Papers--not fun, but served valuable purpose. Just jotting down ideas is not conducive to careful thought and timely preparation. Forced thinking and dialogue. He wholeheartedly supports writing discussion papers.

Marquez:
Agrees that writing papers was very useful--served as two way vehicle for communication.

Kitchens:
Liked informal opportunity to meet with Council prior to meeting; wants to do again.

Varn:
Good to write things down--is efficient way to run meeting and use of time. Focus on agenda being only those things we need to do together.

Prior time should be spent preparing for meeting reading handouts, such as budget material, etc.

Vonderhaar:
Don't misunderstand; he does support more formal structures to help meeting progress. It's just that papers aren't the only way to get things moving.

Drake:
Somewhat agree with both Varn and Vonderhaar. Background reading prior to meeting essential and we will be better prepared. Papers appropriate to some topics; not all issues. Who sets the agenda for the next meeting?

Fisher:
We do; Public Printer informs us of his key concerns and we include them in agenda too.

Morton:
Writing paper based on prepared questions helpful and gives idea of what Public Printer needs from Council. If we do papers again, endorses working in teams.

Cornwell: Explains how approach to papers occurred this time.

Marquez: Still evolving--but for now papers are good basis to move forward.

Varn: To sum up for next meeting:
Suggests talking on phone prior to meeting, plus 1/2 day informal discussion, then 1-1/2 days formal meeting.

Weiner: Wants publicizing of Depository Council to be on next agenda.

Cornwell: Wants 2-1/2 days, rather than just 2 days.

Weiner: Ditto.

Tulis: Ditto--Works better for those who have to get afternoon flights. Also concerned that we set date so know how much time we have to prepare papers in advance of meeting. We all have other jobs to consider. Wants more timely delivery of information next time.

Weiner: Suggest May 13 at Interagency Seminar time.

Cornwell: The other advantage of that is that it will be after the users meeting, and we have no idea what's going to happen at that meeting.

Plummer: Perhaps we better ask GPO about dates; certainly Council impacts GPO when we come to town. We can propose a date to you for GPO's consideration.

Houk: Let's leave this up to staff; no need for Council to belabor itself about such administrative matters.

Kitchens: New issue--Who's archiving? (any formats) Does this fit into restructuring discussion for next time?
(Could not hear on tape the rest of Kitchen's comments.)

Oakley: This is one of the issues we discussed with the Department of State.
As to where there would be a permanent record of these materials. The answer was there would be one paper copy of everything at the Department of State. Now it seems some of these are discontinued.

Swartz: Vaguely remembers previous discussion that there was no control of CD ROM archiving--not as simple as microfiche and paper. There's a big difference between archiving CD glass masters and microfiche/paper.

Cornwell: Don't think you can count on either the regional libraries or the national archives as a library of last resort.

Russell: Talked a bit previously about OMB Circular A-130; one of the things we keep hearing is they are refocusing on entire lifecycle of information including planned archiving of data. Expect to have it out end of January, 1992. We are not alone in this general concern about archiving of government information.

Varn: Is that required of everyone?

Russell: The circular will be fairly high level. I don't know for sure.

Varn: Suggests adding to bid process that archival copies made and stored. Are
            there ways, like this, to set archival standards?

Trivizas: Need to define "archiving."   GPO does archive everything it creates.

Cornwell: Re: Glass masters--is there anything afoot to centralize storage of glass
            masters? Can GPO do this to remedy situation when problem discs occur?

Fisher: Any discussions between GPO and Archives about archival protection and
            understandings? Need advocates to protect and preserve federal documents.
            Let's make sure GPO and Archives do discuss these issues.

Kelley: Why? How does this pertain to Council advising Public Printer?
            Where are we headed here?

Fisher: To make sure there is an archival copy of GPO documents in National
            Archives.

Kelley: McClure/OMB study audits databases leading to other databases. Then
            Archives will have a trail. OMB is moving toward some resolution. GPO will
            analyze OMB's information to see how GPO fits in.

Weiner: Many agencies have not done good job of records management. His agency is
            working on initiatives to create better archival retention procedures. Need
            approval of National Archives to establish procedures.

Oakley: Library community concerned about how to get access to information in
            future if archiving not adequate.

Vonderhaar:
            Glass masters are not archival. It's a temporary artifact of production. Big
            problem. Many working on it--including new legislative branch archive
            committee. Long way from resolution.

Kelley: Federal locator system fit in with what we are talking about here?

Oakley: Two different issues, but important.

Weiner: Good to communicate to agencies more broadly the degree this problem
            exists. His company microfilms everything it publishes as a value-added
            service.   GPO could communicate to libraries need for more protection.

Russell: Notes article shared today re: process of glass replica of CD (Note: title <u>CD ROM Professional</u>, Nov. 1991) Expensive process now, using gold and tempered glass.

Fisher: Time for meeting to end. It was a good meeting.
            Thanks to Mr. Houk and Mr. Kelley.
            Thanks to Council.

Marquez: (On behalf of Council), thanks to all GP0 staff, Public Printer, and Superintendent of Documents.

Houk: Sincere thanks for your contributions. We will hear from him personally with dispatch, especially on how we fulfilled role of Council.

Chair Fisher adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Sioux Plummer, Secretary,
Depository Library Council to the Public Printer

Discussion Papers
Fall 1991 Council Meeting

Discussion Paper 1a

Submitted by Janet Fisher

Question:

Are there some specific documents or databases that can be identified as the "first" or "highest" priority for electronic dissemination? If so, what are they and what criteria can be used to identify such materials?

Summary
Depository librarians want maximum access to government information. The Government Printing Office (GPO) can improve access by offering government publications in as many formats as possible, so librarians can choose the most appropriate for their collection. Librarians also urge GPO to provide better documentation for material offered in digital format.

Title 44 (44 USC 1901 et seq.) directs the Government Printing Office to make federal publications available to the public--without mention of format. GPO distributes depository publications on paper, microfiche, and, lately, has sent some out on compact disk.

GPO sends copies of all depository materials to the 52 regional depositories. In some instances, regional depositories receive the same publication in two media: e.g., paper and microfiche. Selective depository libraries can choose which categories of publications they want to receive and also which format, of those offered, they will receive. For certain of these categories, GPO also allows them to choose the media.

Librarians and their patrons find the material received through the depository program to be a valuable source of information. They are anxious to have access to all the government information possible, and work with whatever media carries it, within the limitations of their resources.

However, depository libraries have a wide range in the support available to them for working with different media. If an item is available in only one format, and the library hasn't the equipment to use that format, they will likely forego selecting that item and deprive their patrons of that information. Depositories hope for maximum choice in formats, so they can offer patrons the largest possible selection of material.

Technology at this time offers two main media for electronically distributing government information: CD-ROM disks and online services. Depository librarians suggest online services be used to distribute time sensitive information that needs to be distributed quickly, such as news releases, regulations, and legislative updates, and

information that is frequently changed. CD-ROM would be more appropriate for cumulative publications, such as indexes/abstracts, statistical cumulations, and monographs.

GPO should carefully consider the permanency of any media it uses, especially if it distributes a work on only one media. Literature suggests CD's have shelf-life of anywhere from three to fifty years.

Depository librarians are also concerned about user support for material received in digital form. GPO should have on hand a support staff of several people, able to instruct depository librarians or staff in choices of public domain software to access the programs at a basic level, and provide additional guidance with computer sources in general terms (it is unnecessary to know every piece of software). It was suggested to me that the depositories would be willing to consider having a computer technician as part of their staff (at least part-time) if they would be able to link up with GPO at that same level.

Printed documentation should also be made available for every electronic source. If that documentation is on the source, e.g. on the CD, that is acceptable. If instruction and methods for accessing the product's content are not available at the time of distribution, then the product should be considered incomplete and not be distributed. I was alerted to the situation that documentation for some of the software installed on distributed CD's is not the same as the separate documentation sold through another federal publications distributor, the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

Electronic products should also be as complete as their counterparts in paper and microfiche. The software distributed with the disk should also provide access to all data on the disk. If these situations do not exist, then depository libraries should be made aware of this information through a timely current awareness tool or some type of notice to librarians.

Librarians were anxious to have a voice in issues dealing with format. With the non-standard production of software to access the CD's, libraries are confronting the need for technical assistance and additional staff time to learn to get into each program and perform tasks in it. Time, money, and staff size limit libraries' choices in the selection of electronic products more than it limits selection of paper or microfiche. A manual or documentation package that is readable and easily understood would be an asset. The agencies would need to take notice of this situation and correct it.

Eight years ago, Superintendent of Documents Directive 13 (SOD-13) was written to provide guidelines for the microfiching of paper documents. Documents with 14 pages or less and those documents of a statistical nature that had tables and numbers throughout were considered unsuitable for putting on microfiche. Although SOD-13 stands as an example of criteria to follow in the choice of format, it is in need of revision and is not strictly adhered to. Since this directive needs to be updated, it could also address electronic media or serve as a model for another directive or guideline for divining the suitable format in which to distribute information.

It is not reasonable to come up with a list of suitable publications for electronic dissemination, although several issues stood out in consideration. Of course, librarians would like to be able to make their own choices from a menu of formats. Barring that situation, they would be amenable to having guidelines for those decisions be standardized and firmly adhered to.

Discussion Paper 1b

Submitted by Gary Cornwell

Question:

Are there different criteria for material already in the FDLP in paper and microfiche than for information not available through the FDLP? If so, what are they?

This question has been interpreted in a number of different ways by those offering comments. However, based on GPO's introductory statement requesting Council's assistance in identifying and prioritizing electronic products and services for dissemination to depository libraries, perhaps the question should be rephrased to read: Do different criteria exist for including electronic products and services in the FDLP when the information has already been distributed to depository libraries in traditional formats? If so, what are they?

The answer to this question is a resounding no! The Depository Library Council is already on record as seeing no equivalency between the paper/microfiche version of a title and the electronic version.[1] Consequently, the basic premise on which the question is based is erroneous. Since the two are not equivalent, there would be no case where the electronic information was already in the FDLP in either paper or microfiche. Therefore, it is the opinion of Council, that GPO should follow the same criteria for including this material in the FDLP as they would for any other government publication.

It is clearly evident, even in instances where the print and electronic versions of a title contain the same information, that the applicability of the data is radically different. For example, there is little difference in the information content of the County and City Data Book in either paper or CD-ROM format. However, data from the CD-ROM can be downloaded and manipulated in a variety of ways in which the paper format cannot. Further, a limitless number of customized subsets and reports can be generated utilizing the CD- ROM version whereas the user is limited to the published format of the paper version.

Other CD-ROMs produced by the Census Bureau, such as County Business Patterns, contain a wealth of information that is simply not included in the print versions of the title. With even larger data sets, such as the 1990 decennial census, no attempt whatsoever will be made to distribute all the information in print format. The vast majority of this material will only be distributed in machine readable format.

It should be noted at this juncture that the print sources which have traditionally appeared represent a valuable subset of information and data that is extremely pertinent and useful to the user community. In this instance, the traditional print sources represent an irreplaceable adjunct to the electronic sources of information. Other white papers will discuss in more detail the importance of keeping traditional formats in the FDLP. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that many libraries within the FDLP are not in position to access electronic products and consequently are dependent upon the print sources. Additionally, much of the graphic information contained in traditional formats is not replicated in the electronic versions.

If criteria exist which are to be considered for including government publications into the Federal Depository Library Program, those criteria are clearly articulated in Title 44 USC. Unfortunately, even with traditional formats, the GPO has a less than satisfactory track record for obtaining copies of documents for distribution to depository libraries. The problem with fugitive documents is both long-standing and well-publicized. It will not be discussed here except to note that no solutions to the problem appear to be forthcoming. Indeed, the extent and likely continuation of the problem is typified by the fact that two private vendors (CIS and Readex) have both developed proposals for publishing and marketing collections of fugitive government publications. GPO's recently released "Guidelines for the Provision of Government Publications for Depository Library Distribution" have done little to correct or alleviate the problems associated with fugitive documents. Consequently, based on GPO's problems with delivering paper copies of documents into the program, it seems redundant to consider limiting criteria that would restrict the distribution of government information produced in non-traditional formats.

The real issue here is rather than devising criteria and methods for restricting the flow of government information to depository libraries, the GPO should be redoubling their efforts to preserve and expand the system to include all government publications regardless of format. At a time when the rest of the federal bureaucracy is rapidly advancing into the 21st century, GPO appears to be slow and overly cautious in responding to the challenges of new technology. GPO's reluctance to enlist and utilize electronic sources such as the Internet (which would offer key staff the opportunity to, at the very minimum, monitor developments in the field of government documents) is puzzling and frustrating to the depository community. An Internet connection would allow federal agencies, such as the Department of State, the capability to disseminate their online services free to depository libraries-- thus reducing the reliance on private vendors. This type of thoughtful cost savings would be greatly appreciated by those libraries on the Internet system; and those libraries not on Internet could still receive the information as they do now. Such a bold move may even help non-Internet librarians to convince their administrations to gain access to the service.

It is interesting to note the latest issue of Administrative Notes reported that information gleaned from the Census Test Disk II pilot project was still under analysis. Obviously, any data gathered from that project has been superseded by developments in the past two years. Specifically, depository libraries' capabilities to incorporate electronic information has increased by an untold magnitude; the Census Bureau has refined and enhanced their CD-ROM products; and the GPO has successfully distributed many other CD-ROM products produced by a variety of governmental agencies to depository

libraries. The time is certainly at hand to move beyond the analysis of antiquated data and begin mainstreaming electronic products and services into the depository library program.

Recent developments have made it increasingly clear that government agencies will continue to produce both print and electronic products, as well as add enhancements to them when necessary. Proposals such as NREN, GPO WINDO, and the revision of A-130 are all designed to incorporate the dissemination of federal information in electronic format. Additionally, private vendors, such as Hilton United Corporation, have developed proposals for the low cost dissemination of all digitally produced government information. The irony of the situation is that GPO is already mandated by law to distribute the information to depository libraries via the FDLP. If the GPO were fulfilling its mission, would there be a need for GPO WINDO or similar legislation that might be proposed?

Clearly, six of the ten questions posed for discussion at this meeting deal with restricting libraries' access to government information and none deal with alternatives or strategies for an increased role by the GPO in information gathering and distribution. While offering the potential to significantly enhance the FDLP, proposals such as GPO WINDO have a number of caveats associated with them. Indeed, virtually all these proposals are dependent upon some sort of restructuring of the depository library system. It would seem that the entire information industry would be better served by discussion of issues designed to enhance the flow of government information rather than restrict it. For example, McClure, Hernon and others have laid the groundwork for the discussion of the restructuring of the depository library system.[2] NREN or GPO WINDO could certainly serve as the impetus for a national conference consisting of JCP, GPO, federal publishers, and recognized leaders in the field of libraries and government documents to develop strategies for realigning the system with the current needs of both the information producing agencies and the information seeking public.

The amount of legislation proposed during the past few years is a clear indication that Congress and federal agencies are ready for bold new approaches to dissemination of government information. GPO is poised by both historical precedent and by law to assume a leadership role in these endeavors. However, the time for quick, positive action is now. Perhaps the next Council meeting should be devoted to developing strategies designed to enhance the program. One suggestion would be to have an expert on the Internet write a white paper describing the various options and costs for providing GPO access to the service. As many of these experts reside in the Washington area, they could be brought in to take part in the discussion at little or no cost.

The increasing fear among depository librarians is that if the GPO continues the trend of restricting public access to government information, as is suggested by the nature of many of the questions posed to Council, agencies will continue to bypass the GPO for dissemination of their products and services. The ultimate by-product of that action will most assuredly be the demise of the FDLP and the GPO itself.

1 Recommendation 6, Fall 1990 Depository Library Council Meeting. The Depository Library Council recommends to the Public Printer that the Library Programs Service continue to offer print/microfiche publications for selection when corresponding electronic products or services become available.

Rationale:
Council understands the equivalency/duplication between paper and microfiche. However,it does not accept a similar equivalency/ duplication between those formats and electronic formats.

2   For a representative sample of discussion dealing with the restructuring of the DPL, see: Hernon, Peter and McClure, Charles, Public Access to Government Information: Issues, Trends, and Strategies, 2nd edition, Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1988, pp 365-390.

Discussion Paper 1c

Submitted by Sioux Plummer

Question:

Since staff and monetary resources for the FDLP are limited, what criteria can Council recommend to assist GPO to prioritize its efforts to identify and obtain electronic information products and services for dissemination to the depository libraries? Some specific issues include:

(c) Are there different criteria for electronic information that can be physically disseminated (on diskette, CD-ROM, etc.) than for information that can be downloaded by the depository libraries from a bulletin board or access through "online" interactive information services? If so, what are they? Should any format have a higher priority than the others? Why or why not?

Discussion:

The discussion herein does not necessarily represent my own viewpoints, but those of many. Some statements are deliberately for the sake of more discussion.

There seems to be general consensus among depository librarians, and those depository library patrons familiar with electronic information whom I interviewed, on this subject. Also, question 1(c) begs other questions.

Perhaps the above question should be turned around to ask: What types of information are best disseminated in which formats? Then the question of priority is whether information that will be disseminated in one kind of format should be budgeted for and financed before another kind of information. There are certainly differences in formats that can be attached to different kinds of information, so another question is how to establish priorities based on formats.

Types of information in the following format categories include:

a) On-line Services (Electronic Bulletin Boards, Electronic Conferences, Electronic Mail)

Time-sensitive, fast-breaking news and notices; items that are short in length and change frequently; e.g. news releases, GPO administrative news, Consumer Price Index, legislative status, etc.

b) Electronically stored (CD-ROM)

Items that are not updated frequently, have large databases, and/or have archival or long-term value, such as historical statistics and references, monographs, and less-used titles. Examples are the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), a year's worth of the Congressional Record, and Supreme Court decisions. It was suggested that a good combination of both CD-ROM technology and on-line telecommunications was to make available to depository libraries a dial-up index that lists information stored on CD-ROM.

c) "Hard Copy" (Paper, Microfiche, Floppy Disk)

After discussing this with others, I found Steve Hayes' description of this category typical of most other's point of view. There still appears to be the need for the printed page for the following: frequently consulted information, information requiring long periods of reading a great deal of material, information requiring simultaneous consultation of other resource materials such as maps and tables, and information that has illustrations, graphics and/or pictures where color enhances the reader's understanding or enjoyment of the data.

In addition, I was advised of the value of having such information on floppy disk in order for it to be printed by the reader, but the printed product must have correct page breaks, etc. to make it readable and useful. Examples given were GPO's Administrative Notes Table of Contents and manuals such as ACIR (Advisory Committee on Inter-Governmental Relations). I would be interested to hear more discussion on this point.

Finally, some questions for further discussion that were posed to me under this category:

- Are people REALLY still using paper and, if so, how much?
- In some cases, is eliminating more paper and establishing more CD-ROM work stations in libraries significantly cheaper?
- Is there enough data to give qualified answers to these questions?

Alaskan librarians recognize that our state has been on the "cutting edge" of technology for some time, due to our great dependence on satellites for long distance telecommunications, whether it be for voice or data transmission. However, even though satellite communication is not distance sensitive (remember, the earth is round), there

are not yet uniform or unified telecommunications tariffs (telephone rates). As a result, Alaska librarians have perhaps a greater interest in the physical dissemination of information products rather than on-line services due to the high cost of transmission, in spite of their desire to participate more in electronic bulletin boards and other such forums.

Alaska is certainly not alone with this problem, therefore perhaps there should be greater emphasis by GPO, Council, Congress, FCC and others toward solving the cost inequity problems before putting a great deal of time and effort into establishing criteria and priorities which would make certain information and formats more available and accessible than others. If telecommunications costs were more affordable for both GPO and depository libraries, then information seekers could set their own criteria and priorities as to the format in which they receive information.

Discussion Paper 1d

Submitted by Robert L. Oakley

Question:

Under what circumstances should the availability of Government information from other sources be a factor in setting GPO's priorities for making additional dissemination through the FDLP? Does it make a difference if the other source is free or at low cost? Does it make a difference if the other source is the Federal government or not?

This question carries with it several assumptions that are at the least troubling, and probably wrong. On first reading, it appears to be an invitation to continue the discussion engendered by the Paperwork Reduction Act, to wit: to what extent should the availability of government information from other private or public sources affect the dissemination of that information by an agency? However, a more careful reading reveals that it is narrower and more focused than the Paperwork Reduction Act discussion since it focuses solely on GPO's role to disseminate information to Depository Libraries.

In asking about GPO's priorities for making additional dissemination, the pertinence of the question is difficult to ascertain. It is not up to the Government Printing Office to set priorities among publications issued by agencies and decide that some are disseminated while others are not. Under Title 44 of the U.S. Code, agencies are required to submit all publications[1] to the Government Printing Office for dissemination through the Federal Depository Library Program.[2] The decision about which publications are to be issued rests with the issuing agencies, not with the Government Printing office, and all such publications are mandated to be part of the program. Further, there is no exception in the statute for electronic publication. The concept of electronic publication is now well established, and material published in that form should be fully a part of the Depository program.

Moreover, the use of the term "additional dissemination" in the question suggests

that the initial dissemination has been made and that distribution through the Depository Program is merely supplemental. This is the wrong approach to public dissemination of government documents. The initial dissemination of a document is through the issuing agency and through the Federal Depository Library Program to those libraries that have selected the document in question. Depository distribution can in no way be seen or be implied to be supplemental. Other dissemination - from public and private sources - may provide additional access, better software, or other value-added enhancements. But depository distribution is a primary means of disseminating information to the public.

For the foregoing reasons, the question under discussion is troublesome. The assumptions behind the question are a distraction from the real issues. The writer does not wish to beg the question, but he felt constrained to point out the difficulty.

Since the decision to issue a publication is an individual agency decision, how should an agency approach the questions posed in Question 1d? Ab initio, the availability of government information from other sources should not be a factor. Government agencies must make the determination about their information dissemination program according to their own mission, goals, and the needs of their users.

Some agencies have, however, in fact, looked at the market place as a factor when making such decisions under the now discredited Circular A-130 from the Office of Management and Budget. OMB is currently redrafting that circular in response to widespread criticism. If an agency were to be influenced by another product, it would have to look beyond the mere availability of that product to ask other, sometimes difficult, questions. For example, it would have to inquire about the financial stability of the company putting out the product and whether or not it is likely to be able to continue to do so. Second, it would have to look closely at the cost of the product, both to libraries and to end users. Part of the mission of the agency is likely to be to make the information available directly to the public free or at a reasonable price. Reliance on an expensive commercial service cannot fulfill that objective. Third, a related consideration is whether the company could or would meet the obligation of Title 44 to make the information available free to depository libraries. Fourth, in some cases, the agency may have to inquire about the ownership of the company making the information available. Without impugning any current information vendor, as a policy matter it does not seem appropriate for government agencies or citizens of the United States to rely on foreign-owned companies for basic information about the laws of their country. No doubt, an agency would consider many other factors as well. The availability of information from other sources may be a consideration, but only a secondary one, and one that must be tempered by examination of a number of related issues.

Despite the cautions noted at the outset of this discussion, there may be two instances when the Government Printing Office may be called upon to establish priorities for the dissemination of information. The first is for those products and services for which GPO is the issuing agency. In those cases, the discussion in the foregoing paragraph applies fully to the Government Printing Office itself. Its mission is to disseminate information to the public. One mechanism by which that is done is to disseminate information through the Depository Program at no cost to the library or its users. In some cases, the dissemination can and should be by paper or microform. In

some cases, electronic publication may be more effective or more efficient. In the case of those publications - such as the Monthly Catalog - which GPO produces itself, GPO has a responsibility to produce the best information product it can to fulfill its mission to the public.

It should not shy away from producing a good product simply because another product exists in the market.[3]

The second area in which the Government Printing Office might set priorities is in the transition to making available electronic products and services created by other agencies. These new information products have been developing rapidly and GPO distribution to depositories has not kept pace. As discussed previously, the existence of those products from the agency alone does not exempt the agency from its obligations under Title 44 of the U.S. Code. Under that section, all government publications are to be made available through the Federal Depository Library Program. There is no exception for electronic publications. As a result, it is incumbent upon the Government Printing office to determine the best, and most cost effective way to deliver that information to the public through the Federal Depository Library Program.

The GPO Windo Bill, introduced by Representative Rose this past spring, offers one mechanism by which the information could be made available. Under this proposal, the Government Printing Office would maintain some datafiles itself. However, it would also house a file server that would act as a switching device - a gateway - to direct depository library users through the computer at the Government Printing Office to a database maintained in a Federal agency. The technology to accomplish this goal is already easily available. The problems that may occur will arise because of scale. With 1,400 depository libraries, it is not known how many simultaneous users there would be of the system. Nonetheless, GPO should begin immediately to experiment with making electronic data available in this way.

A second means by which electronic information could be made available even more effectively is through an Internet connection to the Government Printing Office. Unlike a dial-up connection, an Internet connection would be free to users throughout the country. Although not all depository libraries have access to the Internet, for those who do the information can be made available much more effectively and much less expensively in this way.

The question remains as to which datafiles should be made available electronically first. How should the Government Printing Office begin to set priorities in this area? The writer suggests that many, but not all, of the core documents required to be distributed to every depository library might offer a starting place.[4] The Government Printing Office might move quickly to make available online such documents as the Congressional Record and the Federal Register. Beyond those core documents required under the depository program, it would be appropriate to begin to move in the area based on the availability of information in electronic form together with real or anticipated usage of such data. For example, the Toxic Release Inventory of the Environmental Protection Agency has been widely publicized as an electronic file highly useful to local communities. It is both available electronically and likely to be widely

used by local governments, environmental interest groups, and interested citizens. No doubt, there are many other datafiles maintained by government agencies which would also generate substantial interest on the part of potential users.

The Government Printing Office should consider reviewing the published list of available datafiles in consultation with the Depository Library Council for real or anticipated use by the public. It could then begin to make those files available in the most appropriate format. In some cases, where the database is not too large and does not change a great deal, CD-ROM might be the appropriate format. In other cases, where the data changes daily, online availability might be more appropriate.

1   44 U.S.C. §1901 reads as follows: "Government publication" as used in this chapter, means informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law.

2   See 44 U.S.C. §1902: "Government publications, except those determined by their issuing components to be required for official use only or for strictly administrative or operational purposes which have no public interest or educational value and publications classified for reasons of national security, shall be made available to depository libraries through the facilities of the Superintendent of Documents for public information.

3   Defining the dissemination objectives for an information product or service will vary. Relevant factors may include the need for an official government information product, the needs of depository library users, the cost and availability of competing products, and the level of service available elsewhere ... The mere existence of an equivalent product or service would not preclude an agency from offering a product or service. Even if an equivalent product or service fully met the dissemination objectives of the agency, the agency could still determine that its own dissemination program should continue. (Emphasis added.) House Report 101-927, Report to Accompany H.R. 3695, at 56 (1990).

4   See Appendix A, Guidelines for the Depository Library System (1988). Items which might be considered first include: Code of Federal Regulations, Congressional Record, Federal Register, Monthly Catalog, Publications Reference File, Slip Laws, Statutes at Large, U.S. Code, U.S. Reports, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.

Discussion Paper 1e

Submitted by Chris Kitchens

Question:

If GPO is to increase the amount of electronic information in the FDLP and remain within its current resources, it will have to reduce resources in other areas. One possible area of savings is to eliminate paper or microfiche distribution of data that is

distributed electronically; another is to convert additional material from paper to microfiche. Are there criteria for implementation of these options that will minimize the impact caused by such actions? Are there other alternatives for resource reallocations that should be considered?

The explosion of new information formats is creating a funding problem for GPO. Without additional monies, the agency is faced with the necessity of providing depository libraries access to increasing amounts of electronic formats. A priori, this obligation calls for resource reallocation. However, underlying any decision there must be a clear understanding of the costs involved in distributing both old and new formats: set up costs, one time vs. ongoing costs, life cycle costs. These factors should be closely studied to determine, if in fact, electronic information necessitates funding reallocation.

At this time there is a lack of published studies addressing these issues. The Electronic Pilot Projects are either still ongoing or the results are being compiled. The Library Programs Service is just completing a feasibility study and cost benefit analysis of the product line of the Monthly Catalog - paper, microfiche, machine readable tapes, CD-ROM and online service. A close analysis of all these projects is called for before any far reaching measures are implemented which will affect one of the major nationwide distribution networks of government information. Project findings may indicate that increasing information in electronic formats will in itself be a savings. Going online or using CD-ROM products may not necessarily be as cost prohibitive as speculated.

While these results are under study, two measures have been proposed to offset the cost of electronic products: (1) conversion of additional material from paper to microfiche, (2) elimination of paper or microfiche distribution of data that is available electronically.

In the first scenario, the Depository Library community is concerned with the already existing glut of microfiche. Additional conversion is seen as compounding the problem. But if GPO chooses to proceed in this direction, the criteria established in SOD-13 could still be used to minimize the impact of more conversion. However, it is necessary to point out that SOD-13 is outdated and sorely in need of revision.

In the second scenario, criteria have not yet been established to determine which paper/microfiche publications should be eliminated when the data is also distributed electronically. At the Spring '91 DLC meeting, Council recommended to the Public Printer that, at this time, the Library Programs Service continue to offer print/microfiche publications for selection when corresponding electronic products or services become available. In general the library community accepts the equivalency/duplication between paper and microfiche. But, in the case of electronic products, the issue is not seen as the substitution of one format for another. Instead, it is the sacrifice of one type of information for another.

Usage of electronic products is hindered by some of the following problems: incomplete text files, inadequate or incomplete indexing methods, software providing only partial access to the database or disk, and documentation not available at the time the product is ready. These and other problems necessitate that the depository librarians not

only be computer knowledgeable but software and hardware "gurus" -- a major difference between using electronic products or microfiche. In this light, before criteria for elimination of dual formats are established, the impact of such action needs to be determined. Other factors to consider are: lost access, restricted access, staffing, type of user. It is important to keep in mind that technologies generally overlay rather than eliminate each other. Daniel Boorstin has commented that "people expected print to displace the use of memory, the telephone to displace the postal system, the automobile to displace the bicycle and television to displace radio, movies and books. But that's not what happens. New technologies transform the use of old ones. They don't replace them."[1]

Total elimination of one form of information for another is not the only viable solution to cut dissemination costs. There is a need to explore various new combinations and methods of information delivery.

In all consideration and discussions current legislation such as NREN and WINDO must be taken into account. Both pieces of legislation will have a major impact on depository libraries' access to electronic information. The following suggestions are a few other possibilities which could also be considered as cost saving measures for resource reallocations:

Restructuring of the publication selection process can accomplish elimination of unwanted, trivial or nonsubstantive items, thus cutting production and distribution costs. Refining could be done by adding more item numbers for individual titles. A total restructuring would necessitate exploring alternatives to item numbers.

Re-examination by GPO of its internal information dissemination channels could lead to possible reallocation of funding from cost savings realized in other areas.

Restructuring of the Depository Libraries is a natural outgrowth of resource reallocation. This restructuring could take the form of a tiered system as discussed in OTA Informing the Nation[2] and ARL Technology & US Government Information Policies[3]. In addition, restructuring could also consider supra regionals, a more structured depository network or a smaller program with fewer but more efficient depositories.

Regardless of cost savings, the changes being brought about by electronic formats will inevitably result in some form of restructuring. Change is often a painful process and contrary to human nature. During this time it is important that we keep before us our common goal of providing equitable, no fee access to government information for all citizens.

1 Peter Briscol, "Ashurbanipal's Enduring Archetype: Thoughts on the Library's Role in the Future," College & Research Libraries 47:2 (March 1986) 121-26.

2 U.S. Congress, OTA, Informing the Nation: Federal Information Dissemination in an Electronic Age. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, OTA, 1988).

3   Association of Research Libraries, Task Force on Government Information in Electronic Format, Report No. 3. (Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, 1987).

Discussion Paper 2(a)

Submitted by Mark Vonderhaar

The Question and its Context

From the letter of Public Printer Robert W. Houk to the Depository Library Council, June 25, 1991:

2. If an online service or bulletin board is made available for a limited amount of free use by depository libraries, how should that use be allocated? Currently all material distributed through the FDLP, except the paper edition of the bound Congressional Record, is equally available to regional and selecting libraries, and each library receives a single copy. The analogous dissemination criterion for online information would be dividing the available use into equal parts, so that the regional libraries and each selecting library received the same amount of time online. While this appears to be the easiest dissemination criterion to implement and the "most fair," it may not optimize public access to information in an online environment that requires a time-based allocation, rather than physical distribution. What alternative criteria exist and what are the benefits and problems associated with those alternatives? Some alternatives that could be addressed include:

(a) Should GPO offer online access only, or in higher volume, to regional libraries? If so, what additional obligations should the regional libraries assume?

(b) Should GPO offer a higher volume of online access to libraries with programs for broad public access? If so, what criteria should be used to evaluate public access?

(c) Should GPO avoid duplicative dissemination to those depository libraries who already have online access through another source in order to make more time available to libraries that do not have an alternative? If so, how should this be accomplished? If not, why not?

Question:

Let us explicitly assume for the sake of discussion a condition that the question seems to presuppose, namely, that the demand for online usage in at least some depository libraries will be greater than the amount of fully subsidized usage that GPO can afford to supply, at least if the subsidized usage were to be allocated equally.

Title 44 of the U.S. Code outlines the special duties of regional libraries. Section 1912 mandates that, in addition to fulfilling the regular requirements for depositories, regionals will:

... retain at least one copy of all Government publications either in printed or microfacsimile form (except those authorized to be discarded by the Superintendent of Documents); and within the region served will provide interlibrary loan, reference service, and assistance for depository libraries in the disposal of unwanted Government publications.

More specific direction as to the responsibilities of regionals is provided in Instructions to Depository Libraries:

The principal responsibility of a Regional Federal Depository Library is to ensure the comprehensiveness and integrity of the State's or region's depository resources. This is accomplished in two ways: first, purposeful collection development on the part of the Regional aimed at developing a comprehensive Government documents collection under the control of the Regional library; second, supervising the discard process in the State or relevant region to ensure that documents are retained or offered to other selectives.

Within the region they serve, designated Regional depositories must provide interlibrary loan and reference service to both depository and nondepository libraries. (Edition of 4-88, chapter 2, p. 1)

From these excerpts it is clear that a regional library is required to take an active role in shaping an overall strategy for access to government documents within its region. As the text of the statute and rules establishes, this is mainly accomplished in two ways: (1) by guaranteeing the availability of every item disseminated by GPO through comprehensive receipt and permanent retention, except as regional discards might be authorized by the Superintendent of Documents; and (2) by supervising the disposition of items discarded by selective depositories within the region. These traditional techniques for ensuring "the comprehensiveness and integrity of the State's or region's depository resources" reflect the imperative of maintaining locally a copy of each document if access is not to be lost altogether.

For all but a few of the many thousands of titles that GPO's Library Programs Service (LPS) distributes each year, GPO serves merely as a printing services contractor and as a disseminator. The issuing agency is the publisher -- a role that comprises creation of the document, control over its release, and usually its primary dissemination as well.

Even if a publication is one of the select number that are maintained in inventory for the GPO sales program, dissemination through LPS remains a one-time event. While LPS temporarily retains a small number of copies of most documents to fill claims, it does not retain a library of the documents cataloged and distributed. (LPS does maintain a shelflist, but the cataloged documents themselves are transferred to the National Archives. There the documents are stored, but they are not readily accessible.)

Since it has no library, LPS is unable to either make loans of documents or to handle reference questions. Thus, continuing public access to paper and fiche documents distributed through the depository system depends entirely upon retention of the documents by regionals. LPS in fact often relies upon a regional depository library in the

Washington, D.C. area to meet its own reference needs. For all intents and purposes, regionals are the libraries of last resort in the depository system.

In the origination and distribution of online information to depositories, the distinction between a federal agency as publisher and GPO as a service contractor/disseminator would still usually obtain. In a manner analogous to the creation of a printed document, a federal agency would decide whether a particular online database is to be produced, and if so, what its contents are to be. The agency also would be responsible for the design of the database, just as it would structure the contents of a print publication. Moreover, the agency would determine the release schedule and updating cycle for the database.

GPO's role with respect to online access might be to provide depository libraries with an essentially transparent gateway to an agency computer system which serves as a host for the database. Or, the GPO gateway might include software that performs mediation functions, thereby offering a more consistent interface to a variety of agency databases. Alternatively, GPO might negotiate inter-agency agreements to give libraries direct access to agency-maintained online systems for a measured amount of time, as explored in the DOE pilot project. Another possibility would be for GPO to operate its own online system, as it now does on a small scale for Supreme Court decisions furnished through the Court's experimental Project Hermes.

Although the distinction between the agency as publisher and GPO as the processor and secondary distributor is just as clear for online services as it is for printed documents, there are differences occasioned by the nature of electronic distribution that require a fresh interpretation of the traditional role of the regional as the custodian of at least one copy of every depository publication. One difference is that neither the regional nor any other depository would receive from GPO anything that could be likened to a complete copy of an online database. Since as a rule it would be unrealistic and counterproductive to download a whole database, the online information actually retrieved would be incomplete by design. Comprehensiveness inheres in the potential for retrieval, rather than in what is actually retrieved. Only the information desired by a patron at a given moment is delivered, so that "less" becomes "more." A case could therefore be made that the "comprehensiveness" of the regional library with respect to online services is determined by the adequacy of the allocated usage for meeting reference needs.

Another difference presented by electronic distribution is that information received online would be impermanent, in two senses. First, the information retrieved in each search generally would not be in a form that would readily lend itself to retention by the library and integration with its permanent collection. And second, the source database might be altered without notice, so that the retrieved information would neither represent a true copy of any part of the source database, nor would it indicate the currently obtainable results of the retrieval technique employed.

The key to permanent access to online information in the regional context is not physical custody, but rather the continuing availability of the online publication from the source agency. (Obviously, there are related questions about the archiving of databases by federal agencies, but these are beyond the scope of the present discussion.)

Publication by the agency becomes a continuing act, and the assurance of permanence, from the point of view of the depository and the patron, is identical to the assurance of comprehensiveness: the adequacy of allocated usage for the satisfaction of reference requirements.

Although online dissemination relieves a regional of its erstwhile obligation to maintain a copy of all information received, it does not necessarily follow that the regional is exempt from any obligation to provide online-related reference services within its region that are analogous to the "interlibrary loan and reference service" that it must provide with respect to its print and microform holdings. Moreover, even though the regional's authority to grant permission for the discarding of publications received by selective depositories cannot be exercised in the same way for online services, it still makes sense in the context of online services to posit some responsibility on the part of the regional to promote the efficient use of government information resources for the benefit of all depository library patrons within the region.

An important question is whether a regional would have authority to coordinate adjustments in the allocation of online access time. If so, would such adjustments be entirely voluntary on the part of selective depositories, or might the interests of the region as a whole entail compulsory curtailments as to the choice and amount of online service that a selective depository could receive? One potential solution might be the elaboration of a "state plan" concept to address in detail the allocation of online usage in a way that would receive the broad endorsement of the depositories in the region.

An outline of topics for systematic discussion of this question follows. Comments received from the depository library community are summarized in Appendix A.

Topics for Discussion in the Consideration of Question 2(a)

1. (a) Does the current distribution of authority and responsibilities between regional and selective depository libraries for selection, retention, and disposition of depository publications, and for provision of support services, work well with respect to print and microfiche documents?

   (b) Do these current arrangements strike a balance that is worthy of preservation in any policies developed for the selection, re-allocation, and use of online services?

2. (a) Could the potential for better service to depository library patrons through access to federal online databases be realized most economically through allocation of online usage to regional libraries only?

   (b) To consider another possibility, should the allocation of online usage favor heavily used but highly selective depositories, on the theory that they have fewer resources in print and microform that might be able to wholly or partially meet patrons' needs?

   (c) Would strict equality in online services allocation to all selecting depositories

be the most satisfactory overall approach from the point of view of the patron?

3. Assuming that some online usage is to be made available by LPS to both regional and selective depositories:

(a) Does a regional depository have any obligation to use its allocation of online time to provide reference service for other libraries within its region?

(b) If so, does the regional's obligation extend only to selective depositories, or does it also extend to nondepository libraries, in keeping with Chapter 2, Section B of Instructions to Depository Libraries?

(c) If there is an obligation for a regional to use online time in support of reference services for selective depositories, then:

When a selective depository requests services involving online searching from its regional, should it matter whether the selective currently receives an allocation of online time directly from LPS for the database in question?

(d) If a regional is obligated to use its allocation of online time to support reference service to other libraries, must such reference service be offered on the same basis as it is made available to the regional's own patrons (with respect to maximum time per search session, policy on printer use, availability of staff for assistance, etc.)?

4. Again, assuming that regionals and selectives all receive some allocation of online services usage from LPS:

(a) Should a regional receive an extra increment of online time beyond the amount for which a selective depository is eligible in order to assist the regional in meeting the special demands placed upon its resources?

[(b) missing from original--Ed.]

(c) If so, should the use of the extra increment be unrestricted, or should it be reserved for use only in support of reference services provided to other libraries?

(d) Should regionals receive an extra increment of online time to be used only for re-allocation, at the discretion of the regional, to selective depositories in order to supplement the usage allocation that selectives would be eligible to receive directly from LPS?

5. Assuming once more that regionals and selectives all receive some allocation of online services usage from LPS:

(a) Should a regional have the authority to re-allocate online usage from one selective to another, or to itself, if a selective declares that it is willing to relinquish all or part of its usage allocation?

(b) Could such re-allocations be done as open-ended assignments, thus giving selectives with heavy use a way of obtaining on a continuing basis more online time than they could receive directly from LPS? Or would such reallocations be permissible only to help meet emergency needs?

(c) Would selectives within a region be permitted to exchange allocations among themselves, without approval of the regional?

(d) Should a regional have authority to unilaterally adjust allocations of online usage among selectives within the region to better meet the needs of depository patrons?

(e) If a regional would not have such authority in general, would it be able to unilaterally adjust allocations of online usage if it acted according to specific provisions of a state plan or other strategic document that had been endorsed as reflecting a consensus of the depositories in the region?

6. (a) Does GPO have the ability to administer a program that includes differential allocations for online usage?

(b) Does GPO have the ability to administer a program that involves transferable allocations of online usage?

(c) Would LPS maintain timely data on online usage allocations and on actual use?

(d) Would regionals have access to usage records for depositories within their regions? Would selectives within the region have the same right of access?

7. The following questions relate to guidelines and inspection criteria, which will be separately addressed by the Council. The questions are posed here because they might emerge as significant only if regionals are given sole or joint responsibility for the disposition of online usage allocations within the region.

(a) Is an allocation of subsidized online usage provided by GPO to be considered U.S. Government property?

(b) Will the Depository Inspection Program audit the disposition of online usage allocations?

(c) If so, will regional and selective depositories be burdened with additional record-keeping requirements?

Appendix A

Comments Received From the Depository Library Community Relating to Question 2 (a)

(Includes Comments Received through October 8, 1991)

1. Ms. Lily Wai, Documents Librarian at the University of Idaho Library, a regional depository, left a message on the Federal Depository Library Program Bulletin Board System on Aug. 26, 1991 which included the following comment:

    Offering online access to regional libraries would be a logical place to start, but it should not be mandatory for all regionals in the beginning until the regionals are "equipped" and "trained" to do the job. The allocation of the limited free access time should be equally offered to those regionals that volunteer to participate in the online access service.

2. Mr. Byron V. Whitney, Head of Bibliographic Control at the Clarkson University Educational Resources Center, a selective depository, wrote in a letter dated September 5, 1991 that regional libraries should be given a higher volume of free online services, and that they should have to provide "mediated access" to online databases for both depository and nondepository libraries in the region.

    Mr. Whitney also advocates the selection of online services by selective depositories via LPS 's present-day tools of surveys and the annual item printout.

    He further suggests that each selective be given an equal amount of free access initially. That amount would be adjusted upward or downward each year according to the library's usage the previous year and subject to the overall ceiling on the amount of free usage available. Regional libraries would have their time adjusted each year in a similar manner.

    Mr. Whitney concludes that "it would be a use it or lose it system providing additional free time to those libraries that demonstrate a real need through use."

3. Mr. Steve Hayes of the University of Notre Dame Library, a selective depository, commented as follows in a letter dated Sept. 18, 1991:

    Regionals are not necessarily better at providing needed service to the public than many selectives. Requirements on what services a Regional WILL provide are non-existent. Therefore there is wide discrepancy in the caliber of regionals. There are also classes of depositories; some perform well in serving, others do very little but house what is distributed. Not all libraries will want electronic information. Access should go equally to all willing to perform the required services.

4. Ms. Betsy Richmond of the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire Library, a selective depository, placed a message on GovDoc-L on Oct. 1, 1991 which included a statement to the effect that all depositories should have equal access to online products, at least initially.

Note: Other comments relating to Question 2(a) that have been posted on GovDoc-L will be distributed to Council members prior to the start of the fall meeting.

Discussion Paper 2B

Submitted by Sandy Morton

Question:

Should GPO offer a higher volume of online access to libraries with programs for broad public access? If so, what criteria should be used to evaluate public access?

Before these questions are examined I wish to note that they will be discussed from the perspective of a non-practicing documents librarian and should be viewed in that light. I have received enlightening and insightful comments from members of the depository documents community who have a working knowledge of the issues to be discussed at the Fall 1991 Depository Library Council meeting.

I'm concerned about the questions that have been posed for consideration in this paper. It seems that all of the questions the Depository Library Council members are being asked to consider here are actually "putting the cart before the horse." There are larger and more wide-ranging issues for GPO to consider in terms of accessing government information in all formats. GPO, in conjunction with Congress, including but not limited to the Joint Committee on Printing, the House Subcommittee on Printing and Procurement and the Appropriations Committees, must determine what the rules of the game are.

Some have argued that GPO has statutory authority under Title 44 U.S.C. to disseminate all government information regardless of the format in which it is stored. GPO's General Counsel opinions in 1982 and 1989 provided different answers to this question. Another opinion in 1990 does expand the definition of a "government publication" to include "government information presented in an electronic format." Does this, however, provide a definitive response? Can GPO afford to embark on new programs in the area of electronic information without a clear-cut mission to do so?

And if GP0 does forge ahead in this area, how will agencies be convinced/mandated to provide information they produce-- not just in electronic formats-- to depositories? There still is no definitive answer to this question.

Deciding whether large or small, regional or selective libraries will receive some or all electronic products and services is not necessarily what should be asked at the starting point. These are certainly policy issues to consider, but the groundwork must be laid and GPO's authority in this area must be set forth.

It would be well for the Council members, new and old, to examine the alternatives developed for the depository library program in the 1988 Office of Technology Assessment report "Informing the Nation." It is noteworthy that all of the members of the Council have received a copy of that report from GPO. However, two weeks before a meeting is not much time to digest the contents of a more than 300 page report, if one had not had the opportunity to read it previously.

If one mission of the Depository Library Council is to advise the public printer on how to move the depository library program into the next century, then our role must be to work with GPO in looking at the "big picture" and examine the major policy issues. These include: the role of the depository library program in the electronic age and how to convince Congress to adequately fund GPO/DLP so that electronic products and services are an integral part of the depository program.

In looking at the question before us, it must be asked how to define "broad public access?" Should it be defined merely by the sheer "number of transactions?" Libraries in less populated areas have the same level of service available to their public as the ones in urban areas. The number of requests may be less in the rural areas, but the needs of the public are the same. (1)

In essence, those libraries in smaller rural areas or those in a less populated area may be defined as providing "broad public access," since they could be the only library serving a whole community.

Politically, there could be problems with choosing "certain" libraries to receive a higher volume of online access. Congressional pressure could be brought to bear on GPO for choosing (or not choosing) a depository within a Representative's own district. While certain libraries were chosen to participate in the electronic pilot projects, these were only to be studied and were not permanent programs. We should not have Congressional preferences determine which libraries receive access to online services.

Some other comments received on this question include:

"GPO should not offer a higher volume of free access to online services to libraries with programs for broad public access. Rather, the allocation should be based on the same philosophy which governs the distribution of traditional depository materials. Namely, selective depositories choose to receive those items for which they have a perceived need and can support by providing the required facilities and public access." (2)

"Besides the regionals, online free access time should also be offered to selective depositories. The selection can be based on what were used in the Economic Bulletin Board and DOE pilot projects if the survey reports on these pilot projects prove they are fair and workable." (3)

"Where regionals cannot easily serve their entire constituency, they should not be considered the primary recipient of subsidized service." (4)

In terms of criteria to evaluate public access, the opinions include :

"The number of terminals and PCs, hours open, staff resources, number of resources. These criteria should be spelled out and be representative of many types of libraries, small, large, academic and private. Perhaps the resources allocated by library administrations should be influenced by the probability of a library receiving subsidies, i.e. cost sharing. What are the criteria used to determine which libraries

are selected for pilot projects? Random selection may not best serve the needs of FDLP to determine use."(5)

"There should be specific standards by which depositories must operate with regard to service to electronic formats. Criteria should include: equipment on site, reference support (i.e. user assistance in mounting, accessing, printing and downloading information), printing, size of user population served, availability of dial access, number of hours of access, indexing and other technical/ software support, and librarian support for various functions such as extraction, manipulation, etc."(6)

Other issues raised in terms of GPO provision of electronic products and services are:

-- Where will user support come from? Agencies or GPO?

-- Remember the depositories of the west coast; information should be accessible for all, not just 9-5 on the east coast.

-- How will GPO/DLP get NREN policy makers to utilize the depositories?

-- What is the GPO position on the WINDO bill? Can GPO provide the services called for in the legislation?

-- The depository library program and its users are GPO's constituents. What role will they have in examining alternatives for the future of the depository library program in the electronic age?

-- If a strategic plan for the GPO is being examined and discussed, how will the DLC be part of that process?

-- What type of cooperation will there be between the DLC and the IIA/GPO advisory committee?

NOTES

1. Response from Lily Wai, Documents Librarian, University of Idaho, August 26 , 1991.

2. Response from Byron Whitney, Head Bibliographic Control, Clarkson University (Potsdam, New York), September 6, 1991.

3. Response from Lily Wai.

4. Response from Mary Martin, Head, Government Publications and Microforms Department, Claremont College (Claremont, California), September 19, 1991.

5. Response from Mary Martin.

6. Response from Stephen Hayes, Reference and Public Documents Librarian, University of Notre Dame, September 18, 1991.

Discussion Paper 2(c)

Submitted by Susan E. Tulis

Question:

This question deals with how a limited amount of free use by depository libraries to an online service or bulletin board should be allocated.

Should GPO avoid duplicative dissemination to those depository libraries who already have online access through another source in order to make more time available to libraries that do not have an alternative? If so, how should this be accomplished? If not, why not?

I would like to preface my remarks by reminding all parties involved that 44 U.S.C. § 1902 states that "Government publications, except those determined by their issuing components to be required for official use only or for strictly administrative or operational purposes which have not public interest or educational value and publications classified for reasons of national security, shall be made available to depository libraries through the facilities of the Superintendent of Documents for public information." I would also add the statement in the GPO General Counsel's opinion dated December 17, 1990, which states that "Government information presented in an electronic format constitutes a "Government publication" within the meaning of 44 U.S.C. §1901.

Thus stated, I will now attempt to answer the question posed. In light of the statements in the previous paragraph, my response to the question is ABSOLUTELY NOT. In fact, this question should not even be asked and suggests that GPO is seeking a means to shirk their responsibilities delineated in Title 44. A library's ability or inability to receive information from another source should not preclude or be included as a criteria for depository library dissemination. If it was, GPO would have to adhere to the same procedure for materials disseminated in paper and microfiche. If a depository library purchases the Congressional hearings and committee prints on microfiche from a private vendor, does that give GPO the right to "avoid duplicative dissemination" to a depository library as a means to free up funding/or copies to depository libraries that have similar access to that information from an alternative source but chose not to utilize that alternative source? I think not.

What constitutes an alternative source? Is it an equivalent online service or bulletin board? Does equivalent mean exactly the same as produced by the issuing agency or GPO? What if the "alternative source" has some, but not all of the information as that available through GPO to the depository library-- does that count as an alternative source? Who is to make the determination as to an "equivalent" product?

The only way I would say yes to this question is if the equivalent product and access

to it were exactly the same. That is, the cost to the depository library for access through the alternate source has to be the same as it would be through GPO. The information accessible through both systems has to be exactly the same. Equipment requirements for the depository has to be exactly the same, etc. Assuming all of that, then we can proceed to the next likely scenario.

If all things are equal, it may be likely that the depository library would chose to not select the service through GPO because they were already receiving the information from another source. In fact, this is already happening in the print arena and there is a strong likelihood of this occurring in the electronic arena as well.

For example, there are some agency manuals that are not selected by depository libraries because a) they already purchase it from a commercial source, and b) there is a better chance that depository libraries will get all the necessary updates and transmittals from the private sector source as opposed to GPO. Claims to GPO run the risk of being returned "claims copies exhausted" whereas, in the private sector, all such materials would be received.

Another example might be that a depository library decides not to gain access to the State Department's (actually Agriculture's) CIDS System produced by the Martin Marietta Corporation because they can gain access through another private vendor (i.e. LEXIS). Many law libraries opt for this alternative. Granted, law school libraries are in a slightly more unique situation than other depository libraries since a large amount of government information is available through LEXIS or WESTLAW, the online legal databases. However, law school libraries cannot solely rely on these two sources for all government information nor can they rely on them to service the needs of the general public. The contractual obligations with these two private vendors preclude the use of these services by the general public. As a consequence, law school libraries must have available information disseminated by GPO to fulfill their legal obligations as defined in Title 44 as well as fulfill their obligations as outlined in the Guidelines for Depository Libraries.

Many law school libraries have for some time in their item selections opted not to receive a paper or fiche product from GPO because they have access to that same information through the legal databases. But they do this if it is something that, to the best of their determination, the general public accesses very infrequently. Additionally, some selective libraries are located in close proximity to their Regional Depositories which allows them greater latitude in their item selection abilities.

Suppose we do avoid duplicative dissemination-- how is GPO going to monitor what alternative sources depository libraries have access to? Will LPS create an inventory or database and update it periodically as to what alternative electronic services and bulletin boards each of the 1400 depositories subscribe to? This is likely an impossible task for LPS. As an alternative, one would have to rely on each depository to supply GPO with that information. If an item is not selected by a depository library, would you then require that library to list a reason on the item selection sheets as to why they did not select an online service or bulletin board?

There are a number of reasons why I do not think this should be done. First and foremost, the allocation of free access, even a limited amount, should be based on the same criteria that governs the distribution of traditional depository materials. Namely, selective depositories should be able to select and receive those materials for which they have a perceived need and can support by providing the required facilities and public access. It is not fair to penalize those libraries which can afford to subscribe to online service and/or bulletin board. As I have previously discussed, law schools have to subscribe and pay for access to particular legal databases. Should they be penalized because of that? There may be other reasons why a library purchases a similar information product that is also available through the depository library program. The private sector alternative may have more bells and whistles, or include other information on the database that is more highly in demand. A library might be required to purchase a service because of a small portion of the online service, the rest of which duplicates that being disseminated by GPO.

It is fallacious to assume that distribution through the depository library program supplements what a library already has. That is not the intent nor reason for the depository library program. For this very reason I find this question moot.

There are other, more important, matters which need to be addressed such as what happens once we have libraries selecting an online service and the free use of time is divided up evenly? Should there be someone monitoring the amount of use by each selecting library after a specified period of time, say 6 months, to see if all libraries are utilizing their free time? Does it matter? Should those who are not utilizing the free time be given less time the following year? Should whatever free time remaining at the end of the year be divided among those who have exhausted their allocation of free time? How should any remaining free time be divided? How is all of this going to be monitored? Should only those libraries who have the necessary equipment gain access to a particular service or be allowed access to that service? How will this be monitored? Will you have to apply each year and demonstrate a real need for the service (and what constitutes and defines "real need")? How will all of this be promoted?

Finally, where does NREN fit into all of this? How about the use of Internet as an alternative means of providing free or low cost access to an online service? Will the GPO WINDO bill, if passed, negate this entire question? Don't Title 44 and the General Counsel's opinion of delivery of electronic information render this question moot?

Discussion Paper 3A

Submitted by BJ Swartz, with Anne Diamond

Question 3:

Since it's often more difficult for the public to use the new electronic information sources, how should the criteria to be an "electronic depository library" be different than the criteria to be a traditional depository library?

Before jumping directly into section A specifically, we should consider for discussion the concept of a depository institution in the electronic age.

The book, or the printed word, will always be with us; and the distribution of free printed materials (including microforms) to traditional depository libraries should always be part of the Federal Depository Library Program. Libraries choosing to select only print/microform information remain, and will continue to be, an integral part of the program.

Electronic information is appearing, rapidly and in an increasing amount, in the program. A case can be made for treating electronic information as no different from print/microform and for casting it into the program to sink-or-swim. After all, libraries selected microfiche and provided fiche readers to access the information; there is no difference. But electronic information brings with it far more demanding requirements in equipment, software needs, user assistance and staff training. It is one thing to purchase a fiche reader and show someone how to put in the microfiche and read or print it. It is something quite different to purchase at least one CD-ROM workstation that will be required to run a variety of software (as yet not standardized), learn how to use the software and train both staff and users on it, maintain the hardware, and still be prepared to be asked for access before the information has even arrived.

Given the complexity of both the hardware and software, the expertise and staff time needed, and the higher level of user support needed to provide electronic information on an equitable basis to the public, perhaps there should be separate criteria for selection and/or participation in an electronic program. If a traditional depository library has the equipment, the expertise, and the willingness, it should by all means select CD-ROM, floppy disks, or whatever format rears its ugly head in the future.

What we may need to consider is another category of depository library, or rather depository institution. If information centers, for example State Data Center lead agencies or university computer centers, are willing to accept the responsibilities of providing government information under Title 44, they should be able to join the program as "electronic depositories."

Services of computer centers and libraries are overlapping more and more. With the amount of government information becoming available in electronic format, the expertise of the computer center would make it an excellent candidate for participation in the depository system. Magnetic tape could well be included in the program. User support for CD-ROM and diskette would come from personnel already accustomed to providing assistance in using computer products.

State data centers are already providing a high level of user support and training. Including them in the program could only benefit the Depository Library System.

Question 3a:

How should the guidelines and inspection criteria be updated to incorporate changes resulting from the inclusion of electronic information in the Federal Depository Library Program?

Participation in the Federal Depository Library Program carries with it responsibility for housing and providing access to government information. The guidelines and inspection criteria provide a framework or basis for a library's policies and procedures regarding government information.

Given the current limitations of Title 44, GPO is attempting to treat electronic information as it would paper or microfiche. Just as a library should have a microfiche reader if it is going to select fiche, if it is going to select electronic information, it should have the resources to at least mount the software and make it available to anyone savvy enough to use it. If the library cannot provide access to the electronic information, it should either not select it or select it and establish a selective housing agreement with some place that can.

Guidelines:

The guidelines need to become more flexible regarding format of government information. Currently, terminology includes "publication" and "document", specified as in paper or microformat. The focus needs to shift to "information", regardless of format, so as to encompass print (paper and microform) and electronic (CD-ROM, diskette, audio/videotapes, computer tapes, and the infamous - (whatever comes next) products.

References to microform equipment and storage need to be broadened to reflect and encompass new technology. Minimum Technical Guidelines should be appended and should be reviewed and revised annually. Similarly Minimum Staff Competency Guidelines should be developed and appended to encourage staff to keep pace with new developments .

Inspection Criteria:

Depository libraries are inspected using seven criteria, with an eighth for regionals. Electronic information impacts on all of these. Currently, extra credit is given for having a CD-ROM reader and a microcomputer. Including minimum technical guidelines as a part of the criteria is, needless to say, becoming necessary as a condition for libraries choosing to select electronic products, providing that the guidelines are reviewed and revised annually and ample notice is given before any change in the inspection criteria takes effect.

Collection Development:

Format should be at the discretion of the library. It is important to reiterate, however, that there is usually a distinct difference between a print/microform title and an electronic product with the same name. It is the responsibility of both GPO and the

library to be aware of this and to see that selection criteria are clear for these titles: the electronic product may or may not replace the printed product.

Just as when selecting print materials, information in electronic format should be selected with regard to the needs of the congressional district, the library's clientele, etc.

Bibliographic Control:

Libraries are finally becoming more adept at cataloging electronic materials, something that computer centers, in their own fashion, have been doing for some time. A MARC format exists and should be used to include electronic products in the library's bibliographic control system.

Procedure manuals should reflect any additional steps for electronic products, such as processing, staff training, etc.

Maintenance

If a microfiche is lost, or destroyed, a copy can be easily and inexpensively obtained. If a CD-ROM is lost or destroyed, replacement can be expensive or impossible. Libraries will need to obtain processing and storage equipment (engravers, plastic protection overlays, cleaning materials, labels, filing cabinets, security devices, backup disks for diskettes) for electronic media.

Human Resources:

Electronic information brings with it additional responsibility for staff training, user instruction, and user assistance. A standard should be developed to look at additional staff needed to adequately work with patrons when CD-ROM and databases are provided. It is important to look at what arrangements are made, if any, to deal with peak times of public service.

In order to maintain an informed public, the depository would ideally have at least one staff person proficient in using, maintaining, and providing assistance with electronic products. Difficult decisions must be made, both at GPO and in the depositories, about user support and the staffing needed to provide it. Minimum Staff Competency Guidelines should be established and become an important part of the inspection criteria.

Physical Facilities:

One hundred people can use one hundred volumes of paper documents at the same time. If one copy of each CD-ROM is available to be used on one workstation, only one person can use one copy of one CD-ROM at any one time. There must be sufficient equipment for users to access electronic data without having to wait an inordinate amount of time in a queue. Along with minimum technical guidelines, there should be a standard of "sufficient equipment" considering the user population and the size of the "electronic collection."

Public Service:

Depositories need to balance staff, group instruction, individual instruction, handouts/guides, and turning the user loose to sink or swim. Electronic products require more time for user assistance and instruction. Decisions must be made and policies developed regarding levels of support, including hours of varying support levels.

Inspection criteria should include 1) whether user instruction and instructional materials are prepared for electronic products; 2) policies regarding usage times, downloading, printing, etc.; 3) equitable access to all citizens of the congressional district; 4) outreach and marketing, including electronic services; 5) referrals to neighboring libraries with more technical products or more skilled professionals.

Cooperative Efforts:

Cooperation is the core of the Federal Depository Library Program. For a more traditional depository, selective housing of electronic information would be a positive factor in the inspection. If a super depository or an electronic depository structure were put in place, some alteration would have to occur for this category, depending on the type of institution.

Regional Services:

Regionals need to show that they are coordinating - if not providing - technical assistance, continuing education, and referrals to assist selectives in dealing with electronic media.

Conclusion:

In today's rapidly changing, high tech society, the Federal Depository Library Program needs to become more flexible in both its structure and its administration. Conversely, it needs to be rigid in its demand for quality. Without some flexibility, combined with strict quality control, free access for all to government information is jeopardized. In examining the impact of the information age on the criteria for the "electronic depository", we must, above all, consider the depository's role in maintaining an informed public.

It is important to remember that electronic information should not be selected for its own sake, but rather for its value to the public. Print information is still valuable and necessary, as is the role of the traditional depository library.

Looking at the role of the electronic depository, we should seriously consider it as a separate, perhaps overlapping, unit of the Federal Depository Library Program. There is a role for a fully electronic depository, in that it would be dedicated to electronic information and should have the facilities to provide a wide range of user support. There is also a role for the depository combining traditional and electronic information, with a user support varying as widely as the institutions in the program and their populations.

Flexible, but demanding, guidelines and inspection criteria provide a framework for policies and procedures in depositories, and ultimately a cornerstone for their ability to fulfill their role of providing free access to government information for all.

Discussion Paper 3b

Submitted by Teresa Marquez and Anne Diamond

Question

How will electronic information impact or affect standards for public access?

The Depository Library Council adopted the "Minimum Standards for the Depository Library System" to assist library administrators and librarians in their support of government publications collections that are responsive to the information needs of the communities served. Presently, these standards are being affected by the introduction of new electronic technologies in depository libraries and will continue to be affected in the foreseeable future as technological applications alter the generation and dissemination of government information. This has directly impacted budgets, services, personnel and users. Moreover, current economic conditions have impacted the standards, creating inequities in the access of information. Libraries with means manage to keep abreast of new advancements while other libraries struggle to maintain present levels of access, and still others are unable to integrate new developments into their operations. Then, libraries face the challenge of continuing public access to information and minimizing the erosion of access standards. Toward that aim, as libraries strive to remain responsive to the information needs of their users, libraries need to select and maintain collections in electronic formats and to organize electronic information in a manner that insures efficient and timely public access. Also, libraries will need to provide access to information disseminated on-line only and to arrange for its organization and storage for future use. Associated with public access is the question of reference services. Discussions on levels of service in an electronic environment have appeared in "The Electronic Corner" in recent issues of <u>Administrative Notes</u>. Essentially, library policies determine levels of service. And while reference staffs may be expected to be thoroughly conversant with specific electronic formats, to give high levels of service, the same standards are not required for all electronic products. Nor are staff members expected to give specialized assistance, as in data management. Moreover, instructional assistance in the use of software packages and microcomputers may vary, accordingly. The hiring and training of personnel to select, organize and provide access to electronic information in a timely manner, provision of sufficient space for workstations, and for storage, in good condition, of electronic information require a significant commitment from depository libraries. The introduction of electronic information has created an information chasm among depository libraries and inequities in public access to government information. This issue and other issues of concern need to be addressed more fully. For now, several observations are offered and briefly analyzed below:

Collection Development:

Of the 18 "basic collection" titles, a library should select the titles in one, or more formats, if offered, but format should be at the discretion of the library.

Materials in electronic format should be selected which meet the needs of the congressional district, the library's clientele, etc. Ex: If a library has a nursing program, the National Health Interview Survey would be a candidate for selection.

Libraries should be aware of other electronic products available at neighboring institutions.

Bibliographic Control:

Electronic materials should be captured in the bibliographic control system of the library as are other formats. This would include electronic databases. (It would help those libraries that copy GPO's cataloging if GPO were more timely.)

Procedure manuals should reflect additional steps for CD's such as processing, then sending to the information systems staff, then on to public services for staff training, etc.

Maintenance:

As CD-ROM becomes more "mainstreamed," library suppliers are selling more processing materials for this medium: engravers, plastic protection overlays, cleaning materials, labels, filing cabinets, in addition to security level jewel boxes. The literature also recommends installing security measures on pc's for hard disks to prevent theft and/or power surges.

Human Resources:

Once the capital outlay for equipment and software are made, the greatest impact of electronic products on the library appears to staff. Some standard, similar to the Shearer Measure, should be developed to look at additional staff needed to adequately work with patrons when CD-ROM and databases are provided. It is important to look at what arrangements are made, if any, to deal with peak times of public service. Also a new category of staff should be examined: information systems support.

Physical Facilities:

CD's do not appear to require any particular climate control, but do require special handling or little handling. CD-equipment (including filing cabinets or carousels) should be sufficient for those CD's selected. Sufficient printers should also be available.

Public Service:

More time is spent with patrons in training for use of electronic products. This equates to more staff. Other things to look for include what instructional/bibliographic instruction or guide materials are prepared for electronic products? What policies regarding usage times, downloading, print, etc., are in place: do not prohibit or discourage use by all citizens of the congressional district and are clearly visible? What outreach to market the new or newly formatted services exists? What referrals are made to neighboring libraries with more technical products or more skilled professionals?

Cooperative Efforts:

The present evaluation would suffice. If a super depository library structure were put in place, some alteration would have to occur for this category, depending on the type of library.

Regional Services:

If regionals are not providing the technical assistance selectives need to meet this new medium, what continuing education or referral system is in place to assist selectives?

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